

**INVESTIGATING INTERSECTIONS BETWEEN THE FURTHER EDUCATION AND  
TRAINING ECONOMICS CURRICULUM AND GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT  
FRAMEWORKS – IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING**

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## DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the authorship owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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Zayd Waghid

Date: 25 September 2012

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## **ABSTRACT**

In this thesis I investigate whether the South African government's Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs) are aligned with the learning outcomes of the Further Education and Training (FET) Economics curriculum as presented through the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). Central to the GDFs is the cultivation of social justice, more specifically the eradication of inequalities and the establishment of employment opportunities for all the country's citizens. Also, the government hopes to achieve social justice through the cultivation of democratic relations amongst people that will hopefully contribute towards economic development in society, more specifically local economic development (LED).

Similarly, the four learning outcomes, namely macroeconomics, microeconomics, economic pursuit and contemporary economic issues, emphasise the importance of people contributing towards social justice in their communities. The learning outcomes hope to achieve this by inculcating in learners an affinity for democratic action and the acquisition of economics skills, values, knowledge and attitudes that can engender LED. Consequently, the learning outcomes can be said to be aligned with the GDFs on the basis that the common theme that seems to drive both aspects is social justice through democratic action and economic development.

Finally, the alignment between the GDFs and learning outcomes has the effect that teaching and learning will and should be more deliberative, engaging and 'free' – a matter of people exercising their capabilities towards the attainment of human freedoms such as equality, solidarity and the exercise of their rights.

## **OPSOMMING**

In hierdie tesis ondersoek ek of daar 'n verbintenis is tussen die Suid-Afrikaanse regering se Groei en Ontwikkelingsraamwerke (GOR'e) en die leeruitkomste van die Verdere Onderwys en Opleiding (VOO) Ekonomie-kurrikulum soos wat dit in die Nasionale Kurrikulumverklaring (NKV) voorgestel word. Sentraal tot die GOR'e is die kultivering van sosiale geregtigheid, meer spesifiek die verwydering van ongelykhede en die skepping van werksgeleenthede vir alle landsburgers. Die regering beoog juis om sosiale geregtigheid te verwesenlik deur die kultivering van demokratiese verhoudinge tussen mense wat hopelik 'n bydrae kan lewer tot ekonomiese ontwikkeling in die samelewing, veral plaaslike ekonomiese ontwikkeling (PEO).

Terselfdertyd word daar deur die vier leeruitkomstes, naamlik makroëkonomie, mikroëkonomie, ekonomiese vooruitgang en huidige ekonomiese aangeleenthede, die belangrikheid van mense se bydraes tot sosiale geregtigheid in hulle gemeenskappe beklemtoon. Die leeruitkomstes hoop om laasgenoemde te bereik deurdat in leerders 'n aangetrokkenheid tot demokratiese aksie en Ekonomie-vaardighede, -waardes, -kennis en -houdings gekweek word wat PEO kan bevorder. Gevolglik kan voorgehou word dat die leeruitkomste met die GOR'e vereenselwig kan word op grond van die gemeenskaplike tema van sosiale geregtigheid deur demokratiese aksie en ekonomiese ontwikkeling wat blykbaar beide aspekte dryf.

Laastens, die verwantskap tussen die GOR'e en leeruitkomste het die effek dat onderrig en leer meer beraadslagend, interkatief en 'vry' behoort te wees – 'n geval van mense wat hulle vaardighede uitoefen om menslike vryhede soos gelykheid, solidariteit en die uitoefening van hulle regte te bekom.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA)

African National Congress (ANC)

African Union (AU)

Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)

Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)

Further Education and Training (FET)

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs)

Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR)

Johannesburg Securities Exchange (JSE)

Local Economic Development (LED)

National Curriculum Statement (NCS)

New Growth Path (NGP)

New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)

Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)

Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS)

South African Reserve Bank (SARB)

Southern African Development Community (SADC)

Sustainable Human Development (SHD)

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

United Nations Millennium Development Goals (UNMDGs)

## **CHAPTER 1**

# **CONTEXTUALISING THE STUDY OF THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS AND THE FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING (FET) ECONOMICS CURRICULUM IN SCHOOLS**

## **1.1 Introduction**

This thesis has been inspired by my personal involvement in education studies for the past seven years, that is, five years of studying at university and three years of teaching. My encounter with educational policy, in particular the National Curriculum Statement, has attracted me to this study of Economics education policy. Stephen Ball's (2006: 44) use of 'policy as text' and 'policy as discourse' have been instrumental in my examination of the learning outcomes of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), primarily because the former conceptions of policy are concerned with 'statements', 'frameworks of sense' and 'thought', together with the 'use of propositions and words' and 'possibilities for thought' respectively (Ball, 2006: 44-48). Hence, I am attracted to an examination of the NCS and its learning outcomes in relation to Economics education. By way of background, I situate this study with reference to the emergence of the first post-apartheid moment of economic policy formation.

## 1.2 Background and Motivation

In 1994, the ruling African National Congress (ANC) adopted the Congress of South African Trade Unions' (COSATU's) Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) as a policy initiative to address a legacy of injustices created by a previously racist regime. The RDP, as a 'growth through redistribution policy initiative', was aimed at ensuring that the needs of people were met in terms of jobs, land, housing, water and electricity, telecommunications, transport, a clean and healthy environment, nutrition, health care and social welfare (Terreblanche, in Visser, 2004: 111). The RDP became the first guiding economic policy document after 1994, containing the government's focus on meeting the needs of people, eradicating poverty and investing in human capacity development (Visser, 2004: 111). The RDP, however, would soon run into trouble as a result of a government that lacked the capacity to deliver in terms of implementation skills, and huge backlogs in providing access to basic services (Visser, 2004: 112). According to Bond (in Visser, 2004: 113), the RDP was seriously undermined by timid politicians, hostile bureaucrats and unreliable private sector partners. The RDP was seen as rather being a wish list of the government to address past injustices and inequalities, but with no real vision of its implementation; a view shared by Van der Berg (2007: 860). In essence, the RDP did little to aid economic growth and was replaced by a policy framework called GEAR (Growth Employment and Redistribution) (Fiske & Ladd, 2004: 4).

The GEAR policy was initiated by then Deputy President Thabo Mbeki to address a plummeting South African currency and increased globalisation, amongst others

(Fiske & Ladd, 2004: 6). A global market economy had accelerated the integration of economies through the fluid movement of goods and services, capital, technology and labour, which had an impact on decisions about an economic policy such as GEAR (Cock & Fig, 2001: 10). GEAR was implemented by the government as a conservative macroeconomic strategy, with the vision that economic development be led by the private sector, whilst the state plays a smaller role in the economy. Social service delivery budgets and municipal infrastructure programmes had to be reprioritised in order to address the basic needs of the poor (Visser, 2004: 114). On the one hand, the most important difference between the RDP and GEAR was that the former expected the state to play an important role in this people-driven process. On the other hand, the latter initiative would see the government refrain from intervening in economic growth, leaving the capitalist system to increase investment exponentially in order to see an increasing rate of economic growth in South Africa (Visser, 2004: 114).

According to Adelzadeh (1996: 66), GEAR failed to present an analytically sound and empirically justified macroeconomic strategy. Adelzadeh (1996: 78) argues that GEAR, being a conservative macroeconomic strategy, constrained growth, employment and redistribution and would thus not meet the objectives of the RDP. South Africa's economic growth has not increased by the percentage GEAR promised (This strategy sets a target growth of 6% per annum). Also, we find that the private sector, which was to be used as a haven for continued investment, benefitted top multinational corporations, leaving the poor to dwindle in an economy with such great potential (Adelzadeh, 1996: 80). Visser (2004: 116), drawing on the thoughts of

Adelzadeh, further states that the policies of GEAR had been 'analytically flawed, empirically unsupportable, historically unsuitable for the country, and would ... only lead to disappointment and failures in achieving the RDP's objectives of fundamentally transforming the inherited patterns of inequality'. This brings me to a discussion of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which is a vision and strategic framework for Africa's renewal in terms of poverty eradication, sustainable growth and development, integration in the global economy and, the acceleration and empowerment of women.

In 2001, South Africa assumed a leadership role in ensuring that the NEPAD strategy was implemented on the continent. According to the NEPAD policy initiative, the quality of governance is critical for poverty reduction, conflict resolution and economic development (Kotze & Steyn, 2003: 40). This initiative also recognises that education can contribute towards achieving poverty reduction and economic advancement by suggesting that, by 2015, all children of school-going age should have been enrolled in primary schools and expanding access to secondary schooling (NEPAD, 2001: Article 117). Many African states criticise the NEPAD initiative for being a top-down process with little consultation, and for being embedded within 'neo-liberal' prescriptions with a self-imposed structural adjustment programme (Landsberg, 2002: 1). Neo-liberal thinking on privatisation, deregulation, fiscal discipline and export-led growth resulted in NEPAD not being able to live up to these ideals, since there was no significant increase in employment, while poverty and inequality became more and more entrenched (Cock & Fig, 2001: 9; Bond, 2005). Furthermore,

NEPAD has been unsuccessful in achieving its goals in Africa because of a lack of support from several developed countries that have embraced neo-liberal policies.

In his inaugural state of the nation address to the South African public in 2009, President Jacob Zuma unveiled what would be regarded as the government's new economic policy and strategy, namely the New Growth Path (NGP). The NGP is a broad framework that highlights key identified areas in which decent work can be created in South Africa to address the issues of unemployment, inequality and poverty (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 1-2). The NGP sets a target of creating five million jobs in the next ten years, during which unemployment is projected to being reduced from 25% to 15% in the country (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 3). The NGP commits South Africa to partner with other African countries to build a single, integrated economy embracing one billion consumers, to focus on expanding economic links with the rest of the continent (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 4), and to be competitive with the rest of the world.

Considering the partial failures of the RDP, GEAR, NEPAD and also AsgiSA (Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa) – a commitment on the part of key business, labour and government groups in 2006 to halve employment by 2014) policy initiatives, I envisage to investigate whether the Further Education and Training (FET) Economics curriculum resonates with the objectives of the respective Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs). Research of this nature can bring new insights to curriculum inquiry in Economics education, specifically against the backdrop of recurrent growth and development policy initiatives by the government.



Also, this research lends itself to the question: How aligned is current FET Economics teaching and learning with the GDFs?

Education is widely accepted as crucial to the promotion of economic growth, in particular in Africa, where growth is important if the continent hopes to reduce poverty and inequality (Bloom, Canning & Chan, 2006: 8). Poverty reduction strategies in Africa have not always been linked to schooling and a means to improve countries' economic situations. Bloom *et al.* (2006: 37) state that curricular reform is necessary for 'increased competitiveness within the globalising economy'. Also, well-trained teachers can enhance the quality of schooling and give learners greater opportunities for economic advancement.

A well-functioning schooling system can enhance the preparedness of students for university so that they can contribute ably to economic development (Van den Berg, 2007: 860). Fleisch (2008: 33) reviewed several studies that have examined child health and educational performance that contributed to understanding the influence of socio-economic factors on schooling. He found that about 70-80% of learners in primary schools mostly from historically disadvantaged communities underachieve in mathematics and reading, whereas black and white middle class learners from advantaged primary schools have high literacy and reading proficiencies (Fleisch, 2008: 34). A study on the performance of learners in schools and economic development was done by Taylor (2010). Whilst Taylor's study focuses on the socio-economic status of people and its implications for future economic development, this research will examine the Further Education and Training (FET) Economics

curriculum in relation to the GDFs. Another study that investigated the South African FET Economics curriculum in relation to teacher efficacy and learner performance was done by Maistry and Parker (2010) who argue that effective learning in FET Economics happen with improved teaching, in particular on the part of confident Economics teachers. However, I did not come across studies that evaluated the intersection between the Economics curriculum and the GDFs. According to Cassim (2010), there currently is a dearth of educational research about the FET Economics school curriculum in South Africa.

Given the above discussion, South Africa's economic growth and socio-political stability cannot be seen as unrelated to the education that learners acquire in schools. After all, the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) for Economics states as its purpose that Economics equips learners with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will enable them to participate in, contribute to, adapt to and survive in a complex economic society. Furthermore, it will enable learners to demonstrate a critical awareness of the benefits of responsible and sensitive resource utilisation (Department of Education, 2003: 9). Also, the objectives of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for Economics – a revision of the NCS done on the advice of the Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, to be implemented in 2012 – are encapsulated in four topics: macroeconomics, microeconomics, economic pursuits and contemporary economic issues (Department of Education, 2010: 6). Consequently, the FET Economics curriculum prescribed for public schools has to be linked in some way to establishing conditions for achieving socio-economic advancement. But, does the curriculum incorporate an enhanced

understanding for learners of the GDFs initiated by the government over the years, for example the RDP, GEAR, and now the NGP? For instance, in my teaching of FET Economics (Grades 10 to 12) at a local previously disadvantaged high school for the past three years, I have often been confronted with and pondered the following question: Does FET Economics at school necessarily prepare learners for participation in the country's economic, social and political spheres? This question also guided me towards this research study, in particular through creating a desire to investigate whether the current FET Economics school curriculum in fact aligns with the government's attempts to foster economic and social development. This brings me to my research questions.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

Economics in the FET phase seems to be connected to the objectives of the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs) in South Africa and, my investigation aims to examine *how* the FET Economics curriculum and the objectives of the GDFs are aligned with the aim to contribute towards improving teaching and learning in schools.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

I frame my research question as follows: How is the Economics school curriculum (FET phase) aligned to the objectives of the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs) in South Africa? In addition, the following sub-questions will be asked: firstly,

which aspects of the GDFs are attended to the most in the FET Economics curriculum; secondly, how does the incorporation of the objectives of the GDFs (or lack thereof), impact on the teaching and learning of Economics?

### **1.5 Research Approach**

For the purposes of this thesis, the research design involves discourse analysis. I want to make sense (through interpretation and analysis) of the ways in which the objectives of the FET Economics curriculum have been represented conceptually (in terms of the concepts and meanings that guide it) and contextually (in relation to where it unfolds). In turn, I want to find out how these objectives might or might not resonate with the goals of the GDFs, particularly in terms of benefits to social, political and economic development in South Africa. Discourse analysis aims to 'explore the relationships between discursive practices, events, and texts; and wider social and cultural structures, relations, and processes' (Taylor, 2004: 435). In the main, discourse analysis explores, firstly, how texts construct representations of the world, social relationships and social identities; and, secondly, it emphasises how texts are ideologically shaped by relations of power (Fairclough, 2003: 21).

In making sense of how the (learning) outcomes of the FET Economics curriculum might (or might not) resonate with the imperatives outlined in the GDFs, I need to analyse what the learning outcomes of the FET Economics curriculum and the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs) entail. This means that my analysis would be both conceptual and contextual: firstly, analysing the aforementioned

aspects conceptually involves finding out their multiple uses and meanings (Burbules, 2000: 12), that is, the interpretations, descriptions and explanations (Rogers, Malancharuvil-Berkes, Mosley, Hui & O'Garro Joseph, 2005: 370) that inform and guide the FET Economics curriculum and the GDFs' goals. Secondly, analysing the aforementioned aspects contextually implies studying the 'relationships between (policy) texts and social practices' (Rogers *et al.*, 2005: 370), which interconnect the FET Economics curriculum and the NGP's goals, for example, and in the process remaining open to new and unexpected meanings, that is, 'the unforeseeable incoming' or 'the relentless pursuit of the impossible' (Biesta, 2001: 33). So, my method for this research study was conceptual and contextual inquiry.

My methodology is interpretation, because I hope to clarify meanings in relation to both the FET Economics curriculum and the GDFs. Likewise, the meanings that I will examine will be used to develop a more enriched understanding of teaching and learning in relation to the FET Economics curriculum (with reference to Chapter 6).

## **1.6 Summary and Outline**

In Chapter 1 I have introduced the study. This involved giving a motivation for the study in relation to how social, political and economic development seems to be linked to schooling. The rationale for this study was given and the research problem was stated, that is my motivation for doing this research is premised on the assumption that schooling through learning outcomes can engender understandings of economic development that can extend beyond classroom practices. This means

that schooling has some connection with preparing learners to function as responsible citizens in society and to contribute towards socio-economic development in South Africa.

Chapter 2 involves giving a more detailed account of my research approach, in particular the design, method and methodology of inquiry in relation to researching the FET Economics learning outcomes and the GDFs. Here I argue that discourse analysis seems to be a salient way of investigating the identified research problem, because such a form of analysis involves both conceptual and contextual dimensions. Stated differently, through discourse analysis I shall analyse texts (in which concepts manifest) and contexts that constitute learning outcomes in the FET Economics curriculum, as well as texts and contexts that make up the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs), with the aim of finding out how the Economics learning outcomes align with the GDFs.

Chapter 3 involves an interpretation of some of the meanings (concepts) that guide the current FET Economics curriculum in South African public schools, as well as meanings that underscore the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs), in particular how the latter are influenced by globalisation. Simultaneously, this chapter offers conceptual analyses of the FET Economics learning outcomes and the GDFs, with specific emphasis on the resonance (or not) between the former (FET Economics learning outcomes) and latter (GDFs).

Chapter 4 offers an account of the FET Economics curriculum content for Grades 10 to 12, the GDFs and their respective objectives. The advancement of and some of the hindrances in accomplishing such objectives will be outlined. I will also offer an account of how the learning outcomes can help learners to act in a complex socio-economic society. For example, considering that the goals of the NGP (one of the GDFs) are the achievement of job drivers; a development policy package for growth, decent work and equity; resource drivers; institutional drivers; and their implications for provinces and localities (the special dimensions of the growth plan), I want to focus on what it would mean for learners, in relation to the FET Economics curriculum, to function in a more developed, democratic, cohesive and equitable economy. What this means is that I will examine how the FET Economics learning outcomes do or do not align with the GDFs and, in turn, create possibilities for democratic action and economic development. In short, I shall show how the learning outcomes and GDFs are informed by the common thread of democratic action that can assist in bringing about economic development, thus making the enhancement of job drivers and social justice possible.

Chapter 5 provides insights into the imperatives/drivers (as developed in Chapter 4) that can be linked to the achievement of social, political and economic justice, thus making the realisation of the learning outcomes of the FET Economics curriculum in relation to GDFs goals plausible/improbable. In a different way, I shall show how democratic action and economic development can engender social justice through a capabilities approach that, in turn, will make it possible for the former (democratic action and economic development) to be extended further.

Chapter 6 summarises my research findings, explores some of the limitations of this research, and comes up with some recommendations and possibilities for future educational research in this area. I shall show that at the core of my research findings about the FET Economics learning outcomes and the GDFs is the notion that not only should social justice be achieved, but that social justice also should be considered as a human capability able to be achieved. This will make the attainment of social justice a desirable human means and ends process.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN, METHOD AND METHODOLOGY: TOWARDS A QUALITATIVE STUDY**

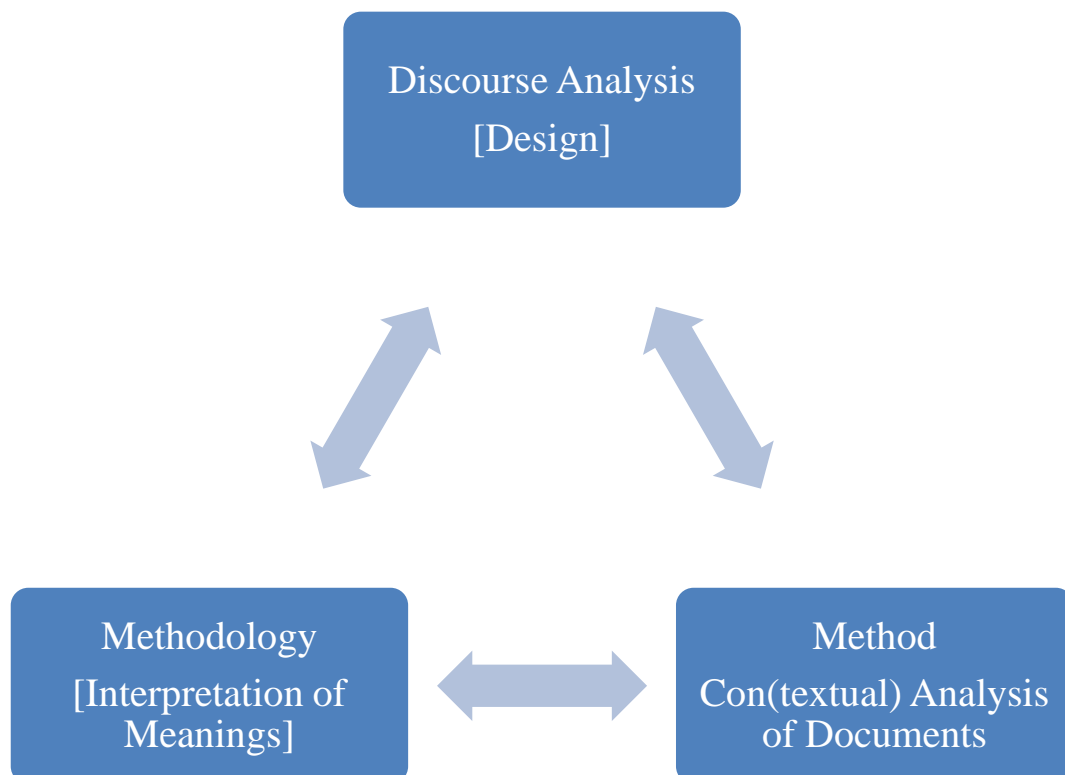
#### **2.1 Introduction**

In Chapter 1 I offered a brief description of my design, methods and methodology. I also justified my use of the aforementioned research ‘tools’ in order to give some account of the research reported on in this thesis. In this chapter I shall extend my use of design, method and methodology. In the main, I am attracted to discourse analysis (design), which allows me to draw on clarity of interpretation with a leaning towards narrativism (methodology) and analysis (more specifically document or (con)textual review) – that is, my method. The link between discourse analysis as design and the methodology of interpretation can be explained as follows: Whereas discourse analysis is the overall framework or approach of the research undertaken, interpretation can be considered as the framework of thinking that underpins or guides the research (that is, methodology) and, (con)textual analysis as the method.

Regarding my methodology or theoretical framework, I wanted to reflect in a self-determining way about what I was doing in relation to the learning outcomes of the FET Economics curriculum and the objectives of the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs), not ignoring my conversations with colleagues and learners. This makes me concerned with meanings, in particular the ways in which the authors

of the FET Economics curriculum and the GDFs intended to give practical purposes to the world. This is what Fay (1996: 25) refers to as 'the interpretation of meaning ... (that is) interpreting the meaning of experiences, actions, or their products ...'. On the one hand, my methodology is interpretation, whereas on the other hand, an analysis of the learning outcomes and GDFs as texts (documents) would be considered as my method for this research. Together, I would be doing a discourse analysis. The following diagram illustrates my use of discourse analysis as design, methodology and method:

**Figure 1: Discourse Analysis as Methodology and Method**



## **2.2 Discourse Analysis as Research Design for an Exploration of the Learning Outcomes of Economics (FET Phase) and the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs)**

I begin from the premise that the research that I undertake in this thesis is qualitative. This means that ‘... meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world’ (Merriam, 2002: 3). Like all qualitative studies, the research that I engage in throughout this thesis is interested in understandings of the GDFs, and how the objectives of these frameworks potentially resonate with Economics teaching and learning for Grades 10 to 12 in schools. The stance I take in this thesis is to understand what the policy documents have in mind, and then to make interpretations about Economics for Grades 10 to 12 in schools from there. In the main, this qualitative study attempts to understand and make sense of policy texts in relation to the Economics curriculum in schools, that is, the context. Like all qualitative studies, this research is also characterised by ‘the search for meaning and understanding’ (Merriam, 2002: 6). In addition, this qualitative study on the area of curriculum inquiry requires some kind of framework according to which one endeavours to undertake the research. Such a framework of investigation is referred to as a research design as indicated in Figure 1 above. This brings me to a discussion of the research design for this thesis.

### 2.2.1 Discourse Analysis as Design

According to Merriam (2002: 11), 'the design of a qualitative study focused on interpretation includes shaping a problem for this type of study, selecting a sample, collecting and analysing data, and writing up the findings'. As has been stated and motivated in Chapter 1, the problem I intend to examine involves investigating how the GDFs and Economics curriculum in schools are aligned. In this way, I have already 'shaped' my research problem (that is, the area or topic that needs to be inquired about) and selected my sample (that is, examining the links between policy and curriculum, if any). So, the collection (or construction) of data, together with my impending analyses and writing up of this thesis, would constitute the remainder of the thesis. In doing all the aforementioned, I shall use discourse analysis (as will be explained in detail later on) as a research design relevant to the area of investigation. Moreover, the features of research design include

... *epistemology*, which conveys philosophical assumptions about what constitutes knowledge; *theoretical perspective*, which is also philosophical in nature and informs methodological choice of methods; *methodology*, which describes the general strategies of inquiry and govern the choice of methods; and *methods*, which refers to the actual and detailed procedures of and techniques for participant selection, data collection, data analysis and reporting (Jones, Torres & Arminio, 2006: 38).

What I am interested in for the purposes of this thesis are the following: Firstly, what theoretical perspective lies behind the methodology in question? and, secondly, what

methods do I propose to use? Before I answer these two questions, I first turn my attention to discourse analysis as a research design in qualitative studies.

### **2.2.2 Brief Overview of Meanings that Constitute Discourse Analysis**

What does it mean to do a discourse analysis? Discourse analysis provides a means of 'getting at' certain meanings, which are constitutive of certain educational settings (Kress, 2011: 205). This approach began about 40 years ago and took on several forms, from being associated with social action to becoming involved in textual and linguistic analyses (Kress, 2011: 207). In educational research, discourse analysis offers, on the one hand, theoretical/conceptual tools for the opening of pedagogic spaces and practices, while in its focus on language, on the other hand, it can be considered as a means for meaning making and learning (Kress, 2011: 208). Moreover, Burbules and Warnick (2006: 491) discuss various research designs that impact on educational research. These include the following: analysing a term or a concept and its uses in order to clarify meanings; deconstructing a term to problematise its usage; exploring the hidden assumptions underlying a practice or policy; sympathetically or critically considering arguments of others; proposing alternative ends of educative efforts in the light of the individual and/or society; considering alternative modes of education in contrast to current understandings; considering closely a text in order to better consider its complex meanings; or synthesising disparate research from a variety of fields to raise implications for educational theory and practice. In doing discourse analysis, one, in the first place, tries to make sense (through interpretation and understanding) of the ways in which

the objectives of the Economics school curriculum have been conceptually, contextually and textually represented. In other words, discourse analysis aims to uncover the meanings of the rationale(s) that guide Economics in relation to the situations that prevail, and then to show how these articulations are presented in a language of education policy. This is what I think Taylor has in mind when he explains discourse analysis as an exploration of the relationships between discursive practices, events and texts, as well as wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes (Taylor, 2004: 435). Such an explanation of discourse analysis is similar to a combination of research activities, which Burbules and Warnick (2000) refer to as 'multiple uses' of analysis in educational research. Thus, discourse analysis explores, firstly, how texts construct representations of the world, social relationships and social identities; and, secondly, it emphasises how texts are ideologically shaped by relations of power (Fairclough, 2003: 21).

In relation to this thesis I firstly want to analyse the discourse of educational policy that guided the formation of the Economics curriculum for Grades 10 to 12. Secondly, I shall endeavour to find out, through analysis, the underlying ideas that constitute the learning outcomes of the Economics curriculum with reference to a critical scrutiny of the policy text, more specifically the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). Thirdly, through discourse analysis I want to find out how these purposes of the Economics curriculum might or might not resonate with the goals of the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs), particularly in terms of benefits to social, political and economic development in South Africa.

### 2.2.3 Discourse Analysis as Different from Textual Linguistics

Often discourse analysis is equated with textual linguistics. I shall now examine the relationship, if any. Textual linguistics and discourse analysis, as two different approaches, may be seen as integrated if we observe the evolution of language research through time (Alba-Juez, 2009: 11; Wodak, 2011: 39; Rogers, 2004: 16). Textual linguistics only studies text, while discourse analysis is more complete because it studies both text and context (Alba-Juez, 2009: 8; Wodak, 2011: 40; Rogers, 2004: 18). However, many scholars have shifted from the approach of textual linguistics to discourse analysis, as part of the natural flow of their beliefs and ideas (Alba-Juez, 2009: 11; Wodak and Krzyzanowski, 2008: 4). When one looks at the history of the two approaches we can see how this shift in fact occurred over time. The early and uniform stage of textual linguistics went through a series of more open and diversified stages, where the 'textuality' stage emphasised the global aspects of texts and saw the text as a functional unit, larger than the sentence (Alba-Juez, 2009: 12; Rogers, 2011: 18). The 'textuality' stage thus led into the 'textualisation' or 'discourse processing' stage, where analysts set about developing process models of the activities of discourse participants in interactive settings and in real time (Alba-Juez, 2009: 12; Werz, Charmaz, McMullen, Josselson, Anderson and McSpadden, 2011: 60). The current aim in discourse analysis is to describe language where it was originally found, that is, in the context of human interaction (Alba-Juez, 2009: 12; Rogers, 2011: 20). The latter refers to discourse analysis as interpretation of meanings as indicated in Figure 1 above.

Despite the considerable overlap between textual linguistics and discourse analysis, both of them are concerned with the notion of cohesion (Alba-Juez, 2009: 7). The approach of discourse analysis is very ambiguous, as it refers to attempts to study the organisation of language above the sentence or above the clause, and therefore to study larger linguistic units, such as conversational exchanges or written texts. It is also concerned with language use in social contexts, in particular with interaction or dialogue between speakers (Alba-Juez, 2009: 9; Rogers, 2011: 22). Here, discourse analysis can be considered as method in order to analyse texts and contexts of documents as indicated in Figure 1 above. Discourse analysis tends more towards a functional approach and is viewed by authors as an all-embracing term, which would include textual linguistic studies as one approach among others (Alba-Juez, 2009: 9; Werz, *et al.* 2011: 62) mentions that discourse analysis is essentially multidisciplinary and involves linguistics, poetics, semiotics, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and history and communication research. He goes on to mention that researchers need to devise theories that are complex and account for the textual, cognitive, social, political and historical dimensions of discourse. Thus, with discourse analysis, researchers are not primarily concerned with 'purely' linguistic facts, but pay equal or even more attention to language use in relation to political, social and cultural aspects (Alba-Juez, 2009: 10; Wodak, 2011: 42).

Discourse analysis allows discourse analysts to investigate the use of language in context, and is more concerned with what writers or speakers do instead of the formal relationships among sentences or propositions (Alba-Juez, 2009: 16; Wodak, 2011: 44). The approach has a social dimension and, for many analysts, it is a



method for studying how language 'gets recruited on site to enact specific social activities and social identities' (Gee, in Alba-Juez, 2009: 11). Also, discourse analysts have helped to shed light on how speakers or writers organise their discourse, in order to indicate their semantic intentions as well as on how readers or hearers interpret what they read, hear or see (Alba-Juez, 2009: 17; Wodak, 2011: 44). Also, they have contributed to the answering of important research questions, which have led, for instance, to the identification of the cognitive abilities involved in the use of symbols or semiotic systems, to the study of variation and change, and to the description of some aspects of the process of language acquisition (Alba-Juez, 2009: 17; Rogers, 2011: 22).

#### **2.2.4 The Significance of Discourse Analysis for this Research**

Using discourse analysis as research design is important for two reasons: First, discourse analysis allows one to consider new questions, or at least to consider old questions from new perspectives, thus opening up different perspectives on the GDFs and Economics learning outcomes. Second, discourse analysis is helpful in identifying and analysing the assumptions, definitions and understandings that underlie current understandings of the GDFs and the Economics curriculum, thus helping to problematise, critique and expand our understanding of economic development, and democracy. Discourse analysis has aided me in my research in terms of analysing the text of both the Economics curriculum for Grades 10 to 12, as well as each of the learning outcomes for Economics, and thus to compare these to the text of the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs) (that is, using method)

and to interpret and understand them (that is, using methodology) to conclude whether there is alignment between the contexts being studied.

Hence, in doing discourse analysis one textually and contextually examines what can, should or will happen to a particular situation; one produces the necessary arguments that can either reinforce one's claims, or undermine one's position or points of view. So, if one produces arguments that suggest that the GDFs actually undermine Economics learning outcomes, then one in fact textually analyses that the GDFs are inconsistent with the Economics learning outcomes. Likewise, if one contextually analyses that Economics learning outcomes are consistent with some of the goals of the GDFs, one provides evidence to justify such a position. This form of discourse analysis relies on the meanings one constructs from data in order to come up with some plausible argument.

### **2.3 Research Methodology: Clarity of Interpretation**

In the literature the following pronouncements are made about methodology: Denzin and Lincoln (2000: 18) explain methodology as 'the specific ways questions are examined'. Crotty (1998: 3) holds that methodology is 'the strategy, plan of action, process, or designing behind the choice and use of particular methods'. Creswell (1998: 77) states that methodology is about 'how one conceptualises the entire research process'. What emerges from the aforementioned views of methodology is that it is a strategy that guides the research and 'provides specific direction for procedures in a research design' (Creswell, 2003: 13). There are a number of

methodological approaches in qualitative research, which include narrative analysis, life history, participatory action research and feminist inquiry, as well as others that are more prevalent in higher education literature, such as grounded theory, phenomenology, case study and ethnography (Jones *et al.*, 2006: 41).

For the purposes of this thesis I am attracted to the methodology of 'clarity of interpretation' espoused by Arminio and Hultgren (2002). For them, the notion of analysis or 'unloosening' that occurs when one (that is, the researcher) spends 'a great deal of time seeking to understand the text' (Arminio & Hultgren, 2002: 456), and then illustrates interpretations with many examples from the text, is at the core of clarity of interpretation. As I have shown in the previous chapter, an analysis of the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs), in particular the New Growth Path (NGP) policy initiative and the Economics learning outcomes, requires uncovering the meanings that lie behind these policy and pedagogical texts respectively. Searching for meanings would invariably give rise to potentially richer or deeper interpretations. As Van Manen (1990: 77) notes, interpreting or analysing involves 'a process of reflectively appropriating, of clarifying, and of making explicit the structure of meaning ...'. To explain further, when I reflect on, clarify and offer and account of how the objectives of the GDFs align with the learning outcomes of Economics in the FET phase, I establish meanings associated with the two policy texts. The latter implies that I interpret because I make possible the arrival of meanings, that is, meanings associated with an alignment between the two policy texts.

As has been explained above, methodology provides the theoretical framework of thinking or pattern of action that I shall use to investigate my problem statement. That is, my theoretical point of departure according to which I investigate whether the learning outcomes of the FET Economics curriculum is consistent with the GDFs involves interpretation. It is interpretation that offers me a framework of thinking to find out the rationale behind the aforementioned policy texts. This is different from the technique of method of research I wish to use.

## **2.4 Research Method: Document (Textual) Analysis**

There are multiple explanations for method in the literature. Examples include the following: Morse and Richards (2002: 13) explain method as the way that 'shares the goal of deriving new understanding and making theory out of data'. Crotty (1998: 3) is of the opinion that methods involve 'the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyse data'. Then, Cresswell (2003: 153) opines that method is that which represents 'the most concrete, specific part essential steps' of the research. And, Maykut and Morehouse (2001: 65) explain method as 'sampling strategy and the people or settings that will make up the sample, data collection procedures for analysis'. For the purposes of this thesis I use method as the procedure or technique in terms of which I shall be or have been constructing data.

Moreover, the method I use throughout this thesis is textual (document) analysis. Following Jones *et al.* (2006: 86), 'it is through analysis that the text or data are undone to bring insight about the phenomenon under investigation'. Textual

(document) analysis refers to the unloosening of meanings in order to discover what is 'hidden in the text' (Crotty, 1998: 2). Considering that this is a qualitative study that is deeply interpretive, the study aims to use analysis 'that offers meaning beyond what is said ... (such as in an) artful, poetic, and somewhat playful (manner) in how the text is unloosened, themes uncovered, and interpretation generated ...' (Jones *et al.*, 2006: 86). Similarly, Denscombe (2007: 247) describes analysis as 'the search for things that lie behind the surface content of the data – core elements that explain what the thing is and how it works'. My task is to probe the data that can help to identify important aspects that can be used to explain and describe what constitutes the texts under investigation.

I acknowledge that many qualitative studies involve the construction (gathering) of data through a number of approaches, including structured and unstructured interviews, conversations, observations, visual realities (for example film and photos), first-person life histories, biographies, and focus groups. My approach (method) primarily involves document analysis (review) because I would spend (and already have spent) a great amount of time and effort repeatedly reading the data in the texts I have chosen to analyse, namely the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs) and the learning outcomes of the Economics curriculum. In doing textual analysis, I shall concentrate on descriptive, common and unusual ideas, phrases and words, and their meanings. This method is representative of qualitative work, which 'enables analysis and interpretation of the text' (Jones *et al.*, 2006: 85). Furthermore, Denscombe (2007: 227) makes the following claim about using documents as a source of data analysis: 'Documents can be treated as a source of data in their own

right – in effect an alternative to questionnaires, interviews or observation.’ To justify the use of documents, more specifically government publications of the respective Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs) and the Economics curriculum for Grades 10 to 12, I agree with Denscombe (2007: 227) when he claims that, at times, documents produced by the state have credibility and, most times, are accessible, as is the case with the texts under investigation in this thesis.

In essence, I have used discourse analysis in the thesis in relation to both the text and context of the investigation. The texts of my analysis were the NCS (and subsequent CAPS) and the GDFs. These texts have been analysed through a search for meanings that make up the language of these policy documents. Meanings that I have found underscore the aforementioned texts, are couched in broad themes that include, democracy, economic development and social justice. Hence, I have uncovered that central to the ideas that run through both the NCS and GDFs are understandings of democracy and economic development that have a direct bearing on the achievement of social justice in South African society. A central theme that unfolds in the texts (as uncovered in chapter 3) under investigation is that democracy and economic development are intertwined (as argued for in chapter 4) and that such practices (democracy and economic development) can engender transformation in society if enacted within the parameters of a social justice agenda (as shown in chapter 5). Moreover, regarding the context of the policy texts under investigation, I have examined education transformation in South Africa since 1994 together with an analysis of theoretical views of economic development that seemed to have guided economic development in the global (including Africa) and local contexts as shown in

chapter 4. Both the textual and contextual analyses as shown in Figure 1 below make up the methods that guide discourse analysis as used in this thesis along the lines of an interpretive methodology. Of course, there are other meanings and ideas that permeate the policy texts that I have studied such as globalisation and sustainable living. But for purposes of a thesis about FET Economics education I have found the central themes to have been democracy, economic development and social justice – all those practices that eventually informed my analysis of teaching and learning in the FET phase that contributed to my findings and recommendations in chapter 6. Again having used discourse analysis (with an emphasis on text, that is, the NCS and CAPS documents for the FET phase, and context, that is, Economics classroom) I have argued for some ways as to how learners and educators can be initiated into social justice practices, deliberation and citizenship on the one hand, and educators be orientated to become more reflexive, on the other hand. Thus, again through discourse analysis I have examined how teaching and learning can be more contextual and transformative.

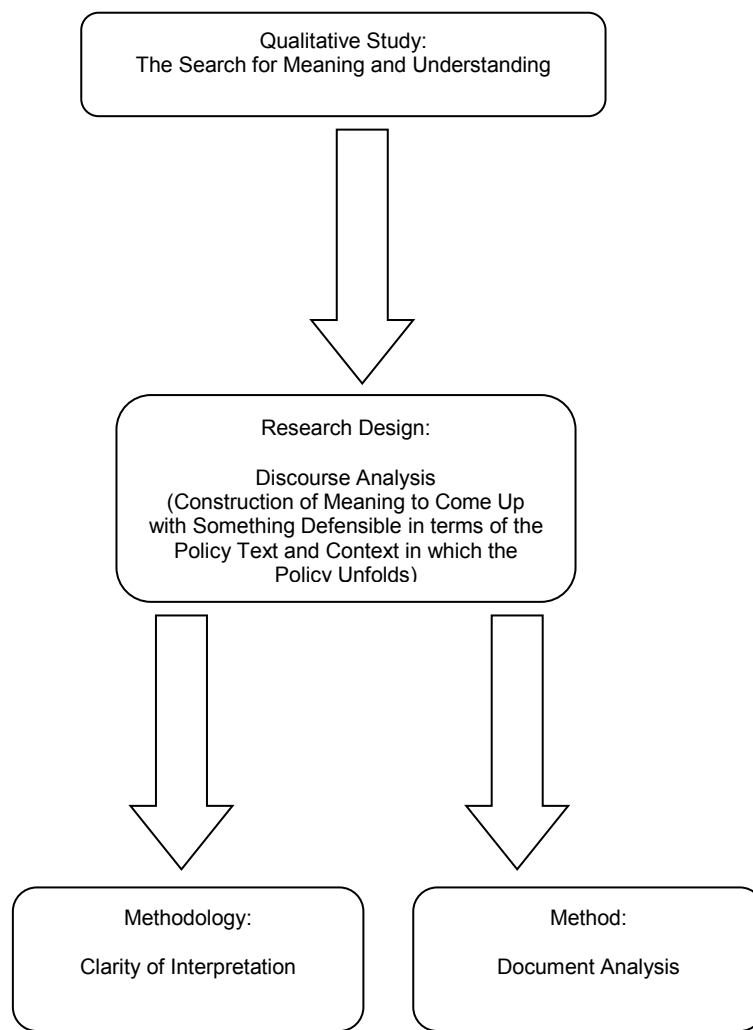
## **2.5 Summary**

In sketching the educational research design I intend to use in this thesis (as represented in Figure 2 below), I have given an account of the nature of the qualitative study. Afterwards, I showed how discourse analysis can be considered as an appropriate design in guiding the methodology and method I employ in this thesis. My methodological concern is overwhelmingly interpretive, focusing on rich descriptions of meanings as they are 'loosened' and constructed. Similarly, along the

lines of document (textual and contextual) analysis, I have indicated my interest in analysing policy and pedagogical texts in order to come up with meanings that will eventually inform my findings.



**Figure 2: Research Approach**



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **ECONOMICS EDUCATION FOR GRADES 10 TO 12 AND ECONOMIC POLICY FRAMEWORKS: GOALS AND MEANINGS**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter I offer an interpretation of some of the meanings that guide the current Economics curriculum for Grades 10 to 12 in South African schools, as well as meanings that underscore economic policy frameworks such as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), Growth Employment Redistribution (GEAR), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the New Growth Path (NGP), and in particular how these policy initiatives are influenced by globalisation. The integration of economies through the movement of goods and services, capital, technology and labour (globalisation) has not left the post-apartheid economy unaffected, because of the government's neo-liberal globalised policies that largely have had an impact on their GDFs (Carmody, 2002: 254-256).

I shall also offer an account of my professional development as an Economics educator in relation to my teaching of the four learning outcomes for Economics. Concerning Economics education, Fischer (2004: 5-6) posits that educators should be supported with structural content knowledge, taking from the neo-classical sources in order to initiate learners into reflective ways about what can be broadly understood as Economics – a scenario not unrelated to my role as an Economics

educator in a public school. In this way I can hopefully uncover and compare rationales for Economics education in the Further Education and Training (FET) phase with the aforementioned policy frameworks with the aim of finding similarities and differences. Economics as a social science entails that learners communicate with one another through deliberation, with learners listening to the reasons of others. In terms of reasoning it is important for learners to engage with one another and to debate on current economic issues that affect society. In my lessons I try to incorporate current issues that affect South Africa to ensure that the learners are aware of these issues. I do this through newspaper articles and other forms of media. The media provide articles that are relevant to the views of both educators and learners, thus allowing for this form of deliberation. I also critically link my teaching with broader issues. For instance, every year the Johannesburg Securities Exchange (JSE) holds a competition allowing learners to simulate the purchasing of shares online to provide them with the skills required to invest on the JSE and to learn about the role such a challenge plays in terms of investment in the country's economy. Through this competition I allow my learners to interact with one another to ensure that there is good communication between them to ensure that the learners gain the necessary exposure and experience to allow them to excel in the calculation of shares. Learners regularly visit our school's computer laboratories to discuss the purchase of shares online and what each purchase signifies for future growth and investment. Another example in case, is my interpretation of the Minister of Finance's annual budget speech and the envisaged impact of the proposed government spending on economic sustainability in South Africa, in particular how learners can make sense of the proposed spending predictions.

My main aim in this chapter is to uncover whether there is a link between the learning outcomes of the Economics curriculum for Grades 10 to 12 (FET phase) and the GDFs proposed by the South African government. But first I shall look at the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) for the FET phase, which guides the Economics curriculum.

### **3.2 The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and its Implementation**

A nation's curriculum is at the core of its education system because it guides learning and teaching (Department of Basic Education, 2009: 11). On the one hand it should satisfy the aim of nation building and encompass the critical and developmental outcomes in the NCS, while on the other hand it uses socially valued knowledge and pedagogical principles to provide clarity for teachers and other stakeholders on the knowledge and teaching expectations of the curriculum (Department of Basic Education, 2009: 11). Therefore, in the context of a post-apartheid South Africa, the NCS was a new concept that coincided with the advent of democracy and had to promote the new Constitution; rebuild a divided nation; establish a national identity; be inclusive; offer equal educational opportunities for all; inspire the oppressed; and establish socially valued knowledge (Department of Basic Education, 2009: 11).

### **3.2.1 Changes in Curriculum Policies in South Africa since 1994**

Curriculum 2005, an outcomes-based curriculum for the General Education and Training band, emerged in 1997 as a response to the aforementioned criteria and offered alternatives to the apartheid curriculum, such as teachers becoming facilitators, pupils and students becoming learners, annual teaching plans becoming learning programmes, and traditional forms of instruction being replaced by facilitation, learning through discovery and group work (Department of Education, 2009: 12). By 2000 the inherent flaws in Curriculum 2005 had become obvious, with specific complaints about learners' ability to read, write and count at various grade levels, their lack of general knowledge, and the fact that some teachers did not know what to teach. On the advice of a review committee, it was recommended that Curriculum 2005 undergo the following changes: acquire a more simplified design; the curriculum overload be reduced in the number of learning areas in the intermediate phase; the terminology and language of the curriculum be simplified; assessment requirements be clarified; content be brought into the curriculum; a plan for teacher training be devised and implemented; and textbooks and reading be reintroduced to bridge the gap between teacher preparedness, curriculum policy and classroom implementation (Department of Education, 2009: 13).

With the completion of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) in 2002, for implementation in 2004, the NCS for the FET phase and all subjects were developed; and teachers were trained in the new content of Economics in 2007. What followed was that formal schooling became divided into two bands, Grade R to

9 (General Education and Training – GET band) and Grades 10 to 12 (Further Education and Training – FET band), under different directorates in the national Department of Education. There is a lack of coordination between the GET and FET structures, as well as a lack of articulation between these two bands. For instance, there is far greater subject knowledge required for Grade 10 than is currently provided at the end of Grade 9 (Department of Basic Education, 2009: 39). As a result, it was proposed that the NCS documents be rationalised into a set of single, coherent documents per subject or learning area per phase from Grade R to Grade 12 by 2011. This was the beginning of the new Curriculum and Assessment Policy (CAPS) (Department of Education, 2009: 62) that I shall address later. This brings me to an overview of the NCS.

### **3.2.2 An Overview of the National Curriculum Statement Grades 10-12 (General)**

The NCS is based on principles that can be linked to the aims of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. These principles include the following: social transformation; outcomes-based education; high knowledge and high skills; integration and applied competence; progression; articulation and portability; human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice; valuing indigenous knowledge systems; and credibility, quality and efficiency (NCS, 2003:1). By far the most important principle that guides the NCS, and Economics education for Grades 10 to 12 in particular, is the idea of social transformation, 'which is aimed at ensuring that the educational imbalances of the past are redressed, and that equal educational opportunities are provided for all sections of our population' (NCS, 2003: 2). In

addition, outcomes-based education forms the basis of the NCS, which ‘encourages a learner-centred and activity-based approach of education’ (NCS, 2003: 2). The NCS is inspired by the fact that learners have to achieve learning outcomes in Grades 10 to 12 that are located in critical and developmental outcomes.

On the one hand, critical outcomes imply that, at the end of the learners’ learning experiences they should be able to: identify and solve problems, and make decisions using critical and creative thinking; work effectively with others as participants in groups; organise and manage effectively and responsibly; collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate data; use science and technology effectively, showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others; and demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of interrelated systems. On the other hand, developmental outcomes are aimed at learners being able to: reflect and explore a multiple of strategies in order to learn effectively; participate as responsible citizens in life situations; be culturally and aesthetically sensitive in society; explore education and career opportunities; and develop entrepreneurial opportunities (NCS, 2003: 2).

Inspired by the Constitution and Bill of Rights, the NCS wants to inculcate into learners critical and developmental capacities that can encourage them ‘to promote human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice’ (NCS, 2003: 4). In this regard, the NCS envisages that learners become sensitive to issues of diversity such as poverty, inequality, race, gender, language, age and disability (NCS, 2003: 4). Thus the kind of learner envisaged by the NCS ‘is one who will be imbued with the values [of] ... respect for democracy, equality, human dignity and social justice’,

especially the learner in the FET band (NCS, 2003: 5). In addition, the FET learner must have access to, and succeed in, lifelong education and training of good quality; demonstrate the ability to think logically and analytically, as well as holistically and laterally; and be able to transfer skills (NCS, 2003: 5).

Moreover, the subjects in the NCS are categorised into learning fields that include the following: languages (fundamentals); arts and culture; business, commerce, management and service studies; manufacturing, engineering and technology; human and social sciences and languages; and physical, mathematical, computer, life and agricultural sciences discussion of Economics (NCS, 2003: 6). This brings me to a discussion of the revised NCS. In the meantime, a national Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) – a single, comprehensive and concise policy document – was released in 2011 to replace the current Subject and Learning Areas, Learning Programme Guidelines and Subject Assessment Guidelines for all the subjects listed in the NCS Grades R to 12. I am focusing on the NCS because the learning outcomes (which are referred to as topics in CAPS) have not been altered for Economics.

### **3.2.3 Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)**

As has been mentioned earlier, the NCS stipulates policy on curriculum and assessment in the schooling sector. And, to improve its implementation, the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) was designed to amend the NCS by replacing subject statements, learning programme guidelines, and subject



assessment guidelines for Grades R to 12. What this also means is that the NCS (NCS, 2003), and the RNCS that followed later, are now replaced by the NCS for implementation in 2012. The purpose of Economics in the FET CAPS document (as with the NCS) is to enable learners to do the following: use resources efficiently to satisfy the competing needs and wants of individuals in society; understand the concept of monetary and real flows in an open economy within the confines of production, consumption and exchange; develop skills to apply demand and supply, and cost and revenues analyses to explain prices and production levels; understand reconstruction, growth and development, as well as having a critical approach to initiatives for a fair distribution of income and wealth, human rights and responsibilities; acquire an advanced Economics vocabulary that will allow them to debate and communicate the essentials of the subject; apply processes that underlie basic economics processes and practices; explain and analyse market dynamics; do problem solving; understand human rights concerns, reflect on wealth creation and engage in poverty alleviation; analyse the impact of local and global institutions on the South African economy; and do forecasting and predictions about economic events (Department of Basic Education, 2011: 10). For the purposes of this thesis, and in the light of the fact that the learning outcomes of the FET Economics curriculum remained the same, I shall focus on the learning outcomes as stipulated in the NCS.

### **3.2.4 Economics for Grades 10 to 12**

According to the NCS (2003: 9), the subject Economics (Grades 10 to 12) 'is the study of how individuals, businesses, governments and other organisations within our society choose to use scarce resources to satisfy their numerous needs and wants in a manner that is efficient and equitable'. The purpose of Economics is to equip learners with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will enable them to participate in, contribute to, adapt to and survive in a complex society, such as by demonstrating a critical awareness of the benefits of responsible and sensitive resource utilisation (NCS, 2003: 9). More specifically, it is hoped that, through the learning of Economics, learners will be able to acquire the linguistic skills to debate and communicate the essentials of Economics. Learners are also expected to responsibly and accountably apply principles that underscore basic economic processes and practices. Likewise, learners are expected to collect, analyse and interpret production, consumption and exchange data in order to make decisions and solve problems; understand human rights concerns, reflect on the wealth creation process and engage in poverty alleviation; and analyse and assess the impact of local and global institutions on the South African economy (NCS, 2003: 9).

I shall now give a summary of the four learning outcomes for Grades 10 to 12, namely macroeconomics, microeconomics, economic pursuits, and contemporary economic issues, with reference to the NCS, drawing on some examples from *Focus on Economics* by Moolman, Burger, Weaver and Zulu (2008) to elaborate on the NCS. This textbook is prescribed in the school where I work, hence my reason for referring to it.

In Grade 10, in terms of macroeconomics, learners are taught basic principles and concepts pertaining to the study of Economics, the problems in terms of scarcity and the violation of human rights, and concepts such as production, consumption and exchange. Learners are also familiarised with the circular flow model, a model taught to learners at Grade 9 level, as well as the impact that the business cycle has on economies, in relation to which stages of recession and expansionary periods are discussed so as to expose learners to current economic issues.

Microeconomics exposes learners to the various markets, and concepts such as utility, value and price, and demand and supply are taught to learners to ensure that they are familiar with concepts such as shortages and surpluses in the market environment. Learners are taught values in terms of choice and opportunity cost, concepts that relate to our ever-increasing needs and wants in society. Graphs or statistics are in essence used in this module to outline efficiencies and inefficiencies experienced by firms and the government. The government's involvement in the market is thus discussed to allow learners to debate on issues pertaining to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the South African National Budget.

In the third module, namely economic pursuits, learners are introduced to the concept of economic development, for which Rostow's model is outlined to inform learners of the various stages of development and how these would eventually lead to the current stage of development, namely globalisation. Here the educator had to link Rostow's model to the stages of growth in South Africa's history. The history of

money and banking is also an integral part of the study of Economics in Grade 10, with learners being taught the history of the Reserve Bank and banking in South Africa, as well as current trends in banking. The composition of South Africa's population and labour force is taught as well, with learners being required to analyse statistics and data relating to the labour force of South Africa and where the economic impact of the pandemic Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV and AIDS) is discussed, to create awareness of its devastating impact and decline in productivity.

In the final module for Grade 10, learners are taught the nature of unemployment and the effects of apartheid that resulted in many South Africans being excluded and marginalised from participating in economic activities. The reconstruction and development programme is introduced to inform learners of changes proposed by the government to combat the injustices caused by the apartheid government. Labour relations are introduced so as to create awareness of the rights of employees in the workplace and to inform learners about the rules and regulations pertaining to bargaining councils.

The Grade 11 syllabus begins with revision of the subject, which includes the factors of production. Learners are also reintroduced to the three sectors of an economy, content taught prior to Grade 10 Economics. Macroeconomics, which is also the first module for Grade 11, elaborates on national accounting, where the circular flow model discussed in Grade 10 is used to outline in greater detail concepts such as gross domestic product (GDP), expenditure and income. Learners are exposed to the

various systems found in economies to provide the distinguishing aspects of each economic system and explain why they are still used today.

Learners are reintroduced to the concepts of markets in microeconomics, the second module of the Grade 11 syllabus. Graphs are discussed in detail to explain production costs and revenues, as well as the various calculations used in determining profits gained and losses suffered by firms. Price elasticity, a concept used to illustrate the effect of price on demand, ends the micro-economics module.

In Grade 11, in terms of economic growth, the Economics curriculum concentrates on globalisation, poverty, wealth creation and distribution. In economic pursuits, learners are introduced to wealth creation and economic growth, elements required for economic development to occur. They are taught the various strategies of economic development, as well as about South Africa's role in Africa. The course highlights the economic and social indicators used to determine the economic performance of economies. The learning outcome, economic pursuits, reintroduces learners to money and banking, concepts covered in the Grade 10 curriculum for Economics, although in greater detail, including a discussion of the money and banking system of South Africa and the reasons for potential bank failure.

The Grade 12 curriculum reintroduces learners to the circular flow diagram and explains in further detail calculations required to determine the flow of income, production and expenditure. The business cycle is included in the macroeconomics content, which was already covered in the Grade 10 syllabus, but includes further

detail of the use of the state's macroeconomic policies in smoothing out the business cycle period. Learners are also taught about the composition of the public sector and its role in service delivery or the lack thereof. Macroeconomics ends with the foreign sector, a subcomponent of the circular flow model, so in essence the entire module deals with the four main participants in the circular flow model and discusses each in detail.

Microeconomics continues from Grade 11, where the various markets such as monopolies and oligopolies are discussed in further detail, accompanied by graphs to illustrate production costs and revenue. Learners are introduced to market failure, a concept used to describe inefficiency in terms of demand and supply, resulting in shortages in the market.

Economic pursuits continue from the Grade 11 syllabus, with learners being reintroduced to economic growth and development and the impact of NEPAD and the African Union on the continent. Learners are also taught about regional and industrial development, as well as the role of South Africa's international trade policies within the global economy. My primary objective in this chapter is to uncover the intersections between the learning outcomes for Economics Grades 10 to 12 and the goals of the development frameworks, of which the NGP is one.

The final module of the Grade 12 syllabus, contemporary economic issues, deals with current economic issues, namely inflation and environmental sustainability. With the former concentrating on price hikes in South Africa, the latter focuses on issues

such as pollution and water conservation, which are discussed in detail. Lastly, learners are introduced to tourism and its positive as well as negative effects on the South African economy.

In essence, Economics for Grades 10 to 12 has four learning outcomes: (1) Macroeconomics – Learners should be able to demonstrate knowledge, critical understanding and application of the principles, processes and practices of the economy; (2) Microeconomics – Learners should be able to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and the appropriate skills in analysing the dynamics of the markets; (3) Economics Pursuits – Learners should be able to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and critical awareness of the policies and practices underpinning the improvement of the standard of living; and (4) Contemporary Economic Issues – Learners should be able to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and critical awareness, and apply a range of skills in dealing with contemporary economic issues (NCS, 2003: 12-13).

### **3.2.5 My Professional Development as Economics Educator and My Understanding of Learning Outcomes**

In 2007 I completed my Bachelor of Commerce degree in Economic and Management Sciences at Stellenbosch University, with the hope of pursuing my career in the education field the following year. In 2008 I was successful in completing the Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), with Business Studies and Mathematical Literacy as my teaching subjects. I was then appointed in the post

of Economics educator at a local high school in Cape Town in 2009, where I was required to teach learners in Grades 10 to 12. Since having been appointed at the school, I have undergone my own professional development as an educator, completing the BEd Honours degree in Education Management at Stellenbosch University. The course allowed me to improve my methodologies and pedagogies of teaching as an educator by completing numerous assignments for the course. As an educator I believe it is important to further one's own professional development in the workplace by engaging with learning material based on previous experiences that educators have had with the current educational dispensation in South Africa. In South Africa, many educators are struggling to cope with the administrative responsibilities and implementation of outcomes-based education, specifically preparing learners to cope with the completion of many assignments and the assessment thereof. Yet we need to develop ourselves in the workplace so as to empower us as individuals with the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to improve teaching and learning in the classrooms.

In addition, the curriculum advisor for Economics requested that I also teach on a voluntary basis at certain disadvantaged schools, often characterised by limited resources and overpopulated classrooms. By teaching in impoverished communities during weekends, I gained first-hand knowledge and experience of what is happening at disadvantaged schools, particularly with regard to a lack of proper infrastructure and skilled human resources. I have attended numerous Economics cluster meetings and, through my engagement and interaction with colleagues from other schools, I have improved my own teaching resources and learning material by incorporating



what has been learnt from these experiences. I have further worked with a local Further Education and Training (FET) college in Cape Town with the hope of understanding the pedagogical problems faced by many learners in terms of distance education. Learners have struggled in the past with learning content due to the fact that the learning material used was inefficient and insufficient in allowing them (learners) to engage with the content, as well as with the various activities that each unit would entail. As a contracted curriculum advisor for the college, I was required to improve the learning materials used by the learners, the study schedules that would be made available to learners, and the relevance of the various Economics assignments. From a professional and personal point of view it can be claimed that there has not really been substantive change in the level of transformation at schools, as one often still finds poor schools in rural areas and townships struggling to cope with the challenging educational demands. To my mind, the problems of a lack of infrastructure at schools, as well as the inadequate levels of professional teacher development, will have to be addressed through more effective training of in-service educators in different and innovative pedagogies of teaching and learning in classrooms.

My professional development at school is consistent with some of the underpinning ideas of the current Economics (Grades 10 to 12) learning outcomes. Like the learners, I am also expected to develop the knowledge, critical understanding and application of the principles, processes and practices of the economy; analyse the dynamics of the markets; develop a critical awareness of the policies and practices underpinning the improvement of the standard of living; and apply a range of skills in

dealing with contemporary economic issues such as democratic governance and equitable policy formation.

Now that I have briefly introduced the Economics learning outcomes and reflected on my role as an educator over the past four years, I shall examine some of the major economic policy frameworks that characterised South Africa's post-apartheid period in particular their goals and strategies. I will sketch some background to show how the New Growth Path (NGP) eventually came into existence, with the further aim to show how the Economics learning outcomes for Grades 10 to 12 possibly connect with some of the goals of the GDFs.

### **3.3 Economic Policy Frameworks: Goals and Strategies**

To my mind, the development of economic policy frameworks are not just important for the participation of citizens in a country's economic decision making, the creation of jobs, and the redress of poverty and inequality, but more significantly, to ensure a country's economic sustainability. It is in this context that I shall pay some attention to important economic policy frameworks as outlined below.

#### **3.3.1 RDP**

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) document indicated that the South African government that was newly elected after the 1994 elections was committed to an integrated and sustained process of development, which would be driven by the people themselves, to provide security and peace, deepen democracy and build the nation (Midgley, 2001: 269; Villa-Vicencio, 2007: 150; Motshekga, 2007: 154). An economic policy initiative implemented by the new government was aimed at empowering the marginalised. It is the marginalised who were previously discriminated against by the apartheid regime. Focusing on the marginalised would hopefully ensure that the people themselves were in control of their own social development.

The RDP contained key pragmatic components that would give prominence to key social objectives. Firstly, the RDP would ensure that the basic needs of the poor were met. This would entail that the poor be provided with housing, access to water, electricity and telecommunications, that there would be land reforms and that enhanced healthcare and nutritional services would be provided (Midgley, 2001: 269; Villa-Vicencio, 2007: 152; Motshekga, 2007: 156). In Economics in the FET phase, learners are exposed to the RDP initiative as a policy implemented by the government to redress past injustices, and the learners are expected to engage in debates and discussions about the various objectives that were proposed by the RDP. In terms of the first key objective of the RDP, learners are exposed to the successes and failures associated with the implementation of the RDP. This is done with the aid of media, as well as video clips pertaining to what the RDP has

implemented. The lesson that is taught is that the RDP aimed to ensure that people were actually provided with basic amenities such as sanitary facilities, access to water and electricity and, that other basic needs were met. It is important for learners to be aware of the challenges of today's society, particularly those facing the poor and oppressed, in order to allow them the opportunity to engage with the challenges that confront the poor and, in turn, to question the ability of government policies such as the RDP to be implemented effectively and efficiently.

Secondly, the RDP focussed on human resource development. It emphasised education and skills development in the implementation of affirmative action policies. It also highlighted the improvement of cultural, arts and youth services and participation (particularly by the poor) in enhanced sport and recreational activities (Midgley, 2001:269; Villa-Vicencio, 2007: 153; Motshekga, 2007: 157). In today's society we find many learners leaving school after Grade 9 in the hope of experiencing a better life by being employed and earning an income. However, with many businesses allowing unskilled individuals to participate in the economy, many of them struggle for years with low wages and salaries. The RDP, as a component of the Economics curriculum, encourages learners to improve their skills after school through tertiary studies, particularly suggesting that learners should pursue tertiary education that would make them eligible to pursue a career in the corporate sector or even at a specific level in the latter sector. The question that needs to be asked here is whether the RDP's objectives were in fact achieved, considering that learners are expected to obtain a decent qualification when financial resources in South Africa, especially among poor individuals, have often been scarce. We find young learners

unable to study further due to a lack of financial resources— a situation that further exacerbates the poverty cycle. While many funding opportunities are made available for learners to embark on tertiary studies, they are often denied opportunities to access funding, possibly as a result of their schooling achievements, which are not necessarily a convincing indicator of how learners will perform at the tertiary level. For instance, I am aware of some learners who were underperformers at school level, yet they did considerably well at university level, particularly achieving their qualifications within the respective time.

Thirdly, the RDP emphasised a reduction in unemployment and the boosting of industrial development, trade, small businesses and resource-based industries such as mining and agriculture, and promoting science, technology and tourism, with a great deal of attention being focused on poverty alleviation and the exploitation that had characterised the previous racist regime's policy (Midgley, 2001: 269; Villa-Vicencio, 2007: 153; Motshekga, 2007: 158). This is an important aspect of the Economics curriculum in the FET phase, as learners are exposed to understandings of many types of businesses and markets, and of how competition leads to price reductions in commodity goods. Also, by exposing learners to this aspect of the Economics curriculum that relates to the RDP's objectives, they are again encouraged to investigate the aspects related to poverty and how economic phenomena such as inflation and tourism affect the GDP of an economy. They are also shown what these concepts may lead to in terms of economic growth and economic development. It is expected that learners are exposed to these issues pertaining to the RDP's objectives to empower and encouraging them to become

efficient consumers in today's society. Considering this, the RDP has nevertheless not delivered significantly and failed to reduce unemployment. Little emphasis was placed on its support for businesses in South Africa to excel, and we find many businesses unsustainable in the long run, leading to many jobs being cut for an already poor population (Midgley, 2001: 269; Villa-Vicencio, 2007: 153; Motshekga, 2007: 157). And, if the RDP did not actually delivered on its promises consistently (Bond, 2005: 25), it would be very unlikely that learners will be positively influenced and encouraged by the RDP's objectives.

Fourthly, the RDP's concern with democratisation as involving a more participatory style of national and provincial government with greater accountability and transparency, as well as the creation of effective local democratic institutions and the strengthening of civil society through increased support for the grassroots nongovernment sector, should also be examined (Midgley, 2001:269; Villa-Vicencio, 2007: 153; Motshekga, 2007: 157). In the FET Economics curriculum, learners are expected to deliberate with one another as equal citizens, to empower and prepare themselves as active citizens in the economy. Yet there is still a great deal of inequality in schools and generally among people in society. In certain areas in Cape Town one would find rich and developed schools with the skilled human resources and infrastructure required to enhance teaching and learning. Yet there are also poor schools with many under qualified teachers, overcrowded classrooms and poor infrastructure. It is evident from the national senior matriculation examinations that the schools with the resources are able to obtain successful pass rates with high academic results, while the poor schools without academic support or enabling

conditions cannot produce the necessary results for their learners to be accepted at tertiary institutions. The RDP has failed to address this disparity in the wealth of schools and, as a government initiative, has not been successful in ensuring equal, quality education, which was one of its (the RDP's) objectives (Bond, 2005: 26). So, the RDP aimed at equalising education and preparing learners for access to higher education, yet the disparities and inequalities remained rife, which actually worked against the realisation of the RDP's objectives.

In essence, the RDP failed to meet the objectives it stated so boldly. Gray (in Midgley, 2001: 269-270) reports that, under the RDP, 200 000 new houses were planned; five million children would be reached by the school feeding programme; an additional 500 mobile clinics would be introduced in the country; and safe and cleaner water supplies would be extended to serve an additional 1.7 million poor people. The implementation of these proposals has failed to eradicate poverty (Bond, 2005: 27) and social deprivation, despite resulting in improvements in the social conditions of millions of poor individuals in South Africa (Midgley, 2001: 269). Also, with a proposed economic growth rate of between 4 and 6% to be achieved, the RDP again failed to deliver, as the actual economic growth rate of South Africa only achieved slightly above the natural population growth rate of 2.5%. As Bond (2002: 27) further suggests, the RDP failed to deliver on its objectives due to the fact that the government lacked the capacity to institute an effective framework upon which the RDP could be based. Also, many government officials lacked the vision to ensure that the goals set out would be realistically achievable, taking the financial constraints of the country into consideration. After only two years the government implemented

the Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy to redress the issues that the RDP failed to address and the goals it failed to deliver upon. And, considering the failure of the RDP to achieve its objectives, it would not be inappropriate to teach learners the reasons why the RDP failed in order to make them more aware of the major stumbling blocks to be overcome in South African society in the country's quest to achieve sustainable economic development (Bond, 2002: 29-30). The next section provides a discussion on GEAR.

### **3.3.2 Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) Plan**

The legacy of apartheid left many problems for the newly elected government to deal with in the mid-1990s, such as the need to increase the economic growth rate; the need to stimulate investment and modernise production; and the need to discover how these goals would be achieved in a manner that would bring about increased wage employment, better wages and greater equality in the distribution of income and wealth (Weeks, 1999: 796; Malikane, 2007: 62; Bodibe, 2007: 75; Villa-Vicencio, 2007: 150). These were the primary goals of the RDP, which set the broad framework for the new government's economic and social policy (Weeks, 1999: 796; Malikane, 2007: 63; Bodibe, 2007: 76; Villa-Vicencio, 2007: 151). With the failure of the RDP, GEAR became the new five-year programme and was announced in June 1996.

GEAR can be assessed on the basis of the RDP's key goals, which stressed the creation of employment and the alleviation of poverty, low wages and extreme



inequalities in wages and wealth generated by the previous apartheid regime, and to ensure that every South African had a decent standard of living and economic security (Weeks, 1999: 798; Malikane, 2007: 65; Bodibe, 2007: 78). The GEAR document placed great emphasis on the monetary and fiscal disciplines, and was aimed at the reduction of the fiscal deficit, low inflation and a stable exchange rate between the Rand and various major trading currencies (Weeks, 1999: 798; Malikane, 2007: 69; Bodibe, 2007: 80; Villa-Vicencio, 2007: 154). Whereas the RDP was intent on serving the interests of social democratic transformation (including redressing poverty and inequality), GEAR emphasised the government's alignment with free market capitalism.

In the Economics Grade 12 syllabus, emphasis is placed on GEAR and its goals as a macroeconomic framework, in terms of which learners engage with the solutions of the government to various socioeconomic issues and problems that the government in fact still faces today. It is important for learners to understand why the South African government took the initiative to replace the RDP with GEAR so that, as young individuals, they may be empowered with the knowledge of how the government would deal with the various socio-economic issues at hand. Learners also are exposed to the two policies to deal with contemporary economic issues such as inflation, poverty and sustainable development. In essence, learners are introduced to the monetary and fiscal policies in order to equip themselves with knowledge of what the government does in relation to the National Budget, for instance, and its impact on the government's proposed measures for poverty reduction and education. Issues such as inflation and how the government could in

fact use higher interest rates to curb the process of inflation, and what the government could do in the case of a recessionary period of the economy, and how taxes could be used to curb consumer spending or stimulate the latter during recovery of the economy are all discussed.

The most important policy changes from the RDP were that GEAR placed greater emphasis on public sector involvement, faster deficit reduction and more rapid tariff liberalisation (Weeks, 1999: 799). The FET Economics curriculum deals with the various trade protocols that the government implements in order to ensure that there is fair and effective trade among African countries. It is important for learners to understand the impact that trade has on economic growth and development, as trade as a source of income for the economy is usually seen as a positive factor that, in turn, stimulates greater investment in the economy by many multinational corporations and other parties.

There has been great concern, however, arising from criticism about whether GEAR did in fact lead to a substantial increase in economic growth and reversed the unemployment crisis, and yielded sufficient progress towards an equitable distribution of wealth and income in South Africa (Adelzadeh, 1996: 70). The GEAR document places great emphasis on the private sector's ability to invest in the economy that adopted the main tenets of neo-liberal strategies and policies to boost investor confidence. In essence, the macroeconomic framework failed to integrate the main RDP objectives and, according to Adelzadeh (1996: 72), rather constrained growth, employment and redistribution. Neo-liberal policies are market-driven economic

policies that emphasise privatisation, liberalised trade and open markets (Cock & Fig, 2001: 10). Also, GEAR contains policies that tend to work antagonistically where the promotion of a fast-growing economy is accompanied by tight monetary policies, which in turn constrict economic activity and public consumption, rather than stimulating these (Adelzadeh, 1996: 78). The government provided very little fiscal stimulus to reach the required growth target that GEAR in fact proposed and for which success was wholly dependent on the response of the private sector (Adelzadeh, 1996: 84). The government's expenditure policy is taken hostage by a contraction of monetary and fiscal policy. This policy goes against the main objective of the document, such as deferring the economy from attaining a significant growth rate (Adelzadeh, 1996: 86). The GEAR policy document is also weak in the area of trade and small and medium-sized enterprises, and lacks any proposal for an industrial policy and strategy. With an estimated annual growth rate of 8.4% for the non-gold export sector, is also seems to be unrealistic (Adelzadeh, 1996: 90). Adelzadeh (1996: 72) argues that the proposed growth framework and policy scenarios are analytically flawed, empirically unsupportable, and historically unsuitable for South Africa.

It is clear that, from its implementation in 1996, GEAR did little to meet the objectives of the RDP. We still find the level of unemployment to be high, with socio-economic issues such as poverty, crime and alarmingly high illiteracy rates in most regions of South Africa contributing to the high level of unemployment in the country. In essence, like the RDP, GEAR had in fact failed to succeed, which led the government to adopt other economic policies to support these macroeconomic

frameworks. In relation to teaching Economics in the FET phase, educators (like myself) use the failures of GEAR as a point of critical discussion to deliberate about what the South African economy ought to do to ensure its development.

### **3.3.3 Accelerated Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (AsgiSA)**

The Accelerated Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (AsgiSA) was started in 2006 and consists of a limited set of interventions intended to serve as catalysts for accelerated and shared growth development (Democratic Alliance, 2007). As a 'national shared growth initiative' instead of a purely 'governmental programme', it has been emphasised by the South African government that AsgiSA is not a new economic policy to replace GEAR, but to serve as a supporting framework for the macroeconomic policy, namely the GEAR initiative (2006 State of Nation Speech in Democratic Alliance, 2007). The AsgiSA policy is aimed at reducing the level of poverty in South Africa by halve in 2014, based on the 'two economies' concept, namely of the first and second world economies, with the latter being underdeveloped and marginalised (Gelb, 2007). The policy targets massive expansion of infrastructure and skills in terms of human resources and education, and thus aims to boost employment in South Africa by prioritising the tourism and labour-intensive export sectors that offer opportunities for small and medium sized businesses (Gelb, 2007). The Democratic Alliance (2007) concurs that AsgiSA identifies certain binding constraints to higher economic growth rates in South Africa that it hopes to remove through a set of strategic interventions, which include the volatility and level of the South African Rand; the cost, efficiency and capacity of the

national logistics system; barriers to entry, limits to competition and limited new investment opportunities; the regulatory environment and the burden on small and medium businesses; and deficiencies in state organisation, capacity and leadership. .

In the FET Economics curriculum, learners are exposed to the volatility of currencies and the impact of the strength and weaknesses of currencies on the balances of trade between various countries. It is an important aspect of the Economics curriculum, as the impact of exchange rates may be detrimental or beneficial to an economy's growth rate, depending on the strength or weakness of the currency involved. Also, in microeconomics, learners are exposed to the impact of imperfect markets on economies, and what impact monopolies and oligopolies have on consumer spending. As economic learners and young consumers, these learners need to be educated about the competition policy implemented by the government so that they become aware, as empowered young individuals, of their rights as consumers in the economy. In essence, AsgiSA's objectives are related to the FET Economics curriculum as the government strives to remove constraints, such as ignoring the rights of consumers. These objectives can be realised through interventions that include infrastructure programmes, sector investment strategies, skills and education initiatives, second economy interventions, macroeconomic issues and public administration issues (2006 State of Nation Speech in Democratic Alliance, 2007). The government has acknowledged since 2003 that inequality and poverty have not been effectively and successfully addressed in the post-apartheid era, and that with the economic policies of GEAR and the RDP the government had hoped to achieve the goals that were so boldly stated in each of these economic

policies. In terms of AsgiSA there are numerous difficulties that the government is faced with in the implementation of RDP and GEAR (Gelb, 2007). From a poverty reduction perspective, AsgiSA is faced with the difficulty of the 'two economies concept', as the first economy would require major restructuring if the second economy were to be uplifted, which would also involve challenging established interests (Gelb, 2007; Bond, 2007).

Moreover, the government's primary focus is on reducing the costs of doing business in the first economy, whereas the government's priority should be intent on extending infrastructure services to those in the second economy (Gelb, 2007). There seems to be a greater risk involved in terms of funding potential black entrepreneurs than in the government's other alternative, involving black economic empowerment in the former white corporate sector. In addition, the government needs to learn how to successfully implement asset-based programmes in terms of which resources are transferred to the poor in order for the proposed 'staircase' from the second to first economy to occur (Gelb, 2007).

In essence, AsgiSA acknowledges macroeconomic volatility as a major potential constraint, and that fiscal resources may be constrained even with adequate growth. Easy fiscal gains from tax revenue are levelling off, and it appears that, amongst the middle classes, both black and white income earners, who comprise the bulk of taxpayers, find it difficult to accept higher taxes to support transfers to the poor. Thus it is clear that AsgiSA has its constraints in terms of reaching the goals of GEAR, and it therefore is up to the government to analyse these constraints and effectively

address them in order for economic growth and development to occur. What is important to note about the FET Economics curriculum is that a study of the AsgiSA initiative would afford learners opportunities to engage critically with what still would be required to ensure more economic stability and development in the country. Learners should be exposed to such debates in the FET phase. This brings me to a discussion of the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

### **3.3.4 New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)**

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is an initiative by African leaders under the auspices of the African Union (AU), which grew out of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) that was initiated in Lusaka, Zambia in July 2001. NEPAD acknowledges Africa's responsibility to create conditions for development by putting an end to conflict, improving economic and political governance, and strengthening regional integration (Kotze & Steyn, 2003: 40). The main goal of NEPAD is 'to give impetus to the Continent's development by bridging gaps between Africa and the developed world' (Assie-Lumumba & Lumumba-Kasongo, 2003: 2). NEPAD aims to pursue new priorities and approaches to the political and socio-economic transformation of Africa and South Africa. It also aims to enhance Africa's growth, development and participation in the global economy (Kotze & Steyn, 2003: 40).

What, then, are the primary objectives and strategies of NEPAD? Firstly, the goal of NEPAD is to consolidate democracy and sound economic management in Africa. It

aims to promote peace, stability, people-centred development and accountability (Assie-Lumumba & Lumumba-Kasongo, 2003: 5). Secondly, it wants to minimise dependence on the highly industrialised countries and to pursue a process of empowerment and self-reliance by integrating African markets and economies into the global economy (Assie-Lumumba & Lumumba-Kasongo, 2003: 5). In essence, NEPAD's key themes to achieve the aforementioned main goals include the following: democracy and political governance; prevention and reduction of conflict; human development by investing in health and education, and tackling HIV and AIDS, TB and malaria, also through the Global AIDS and Health Fund; information and communications technologies; economic and corporate governance; action against corruption; stimulating private investment in Africa; increasing trade within Africa and between Africa and the world; and combating hunger and increasing food security (Nabudere, 2003: 28-29).

This brings me to a discussion of the aforementioned NEPAD goals in relation to globalisation. By now the African leaders have adopted the view that globalisation is inevitable (Nabudere, 2003: 37). Globalisation is a complex and dynamic process, integrating not just the economy, but culture, technology and governance. It suggests a shift in the spatial form and extent of human organisation and interaction to a transnational or interregional level. It is conceived of as a compression of time-space relations involving transnational networks such as world factories, labour flows, lending facilities, communications, new knowledge, information technologies, and culturally seamless cultural norms (Adejumobi, 2003; 131-132). The goals of NEPAD are consistent with globalisation in the sense that NEPAD aims to (1) eradicate



poverty in Africa and to place African countries on the path of sustainable growth and development to prevent Africa's marginalisation in the globalisation process; (2) promote the role of women in all activities; (3) achieve and sustain an average growth rate in domestic product (GDP) of over 7% per annum for 15 years; (4) reduce the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by half between 1990 and 2015; (5) enrol all children of school age in primary schools by 2015; (6) make progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women; (7) reduce infant and child mortality by two thirds between 1990 and 2015; and (8) implement national strategies for sustainable development so as to reverse the loss of environmental resources by 2015 (Adejumobi, 2003: 145). Moreover, in trying to identify the nature of globalisation, in other words, grappling with the meanings thereof (those meanings that make a concept what it is), one comes to realise that there seem to be as many interpretations of the concept of globalisation as there are people or institutions that are in some way or the other affected by it. Globalisation or the influence thereof seems to be all permeating, invading all aspects of society, be it the economic, social or cultural. Depending on the way in which globalisation has affected people and their institutions, it has evoked either positive or negative responses. Advocates of globalisation defend it by positing it as a key to world economic development and thus as beneficial (a panacea), but also as inevitable and irreversible. Others hold that globalisation is responsible for creating inequalities in and between nations (Hoogveldt 1997), that it has a tendency to increase poverty levels through the encouragement of austerity measures that result in retrenchments and human suffering. Hawken (2002: 68), an anti-globalisationist, reminds us that

A billion people cannot work who want to work. That number has been growing faster than employment for the last twenty-five years. Eight hundred million people are malnourished. Eight million children die every year because of malnutrition and disease.

He argues that globalisation should bear the major portion of the responsibility for the aforementioned results.

But what is globalisation? Nzimande (in Kallaway, Kruss, Donn & Fataar, 1997: Foreword) states that globalisation is the transformation of the world into a single market that is controlled by multi-national companies, traditionally emanating from the developed countries of the north. Ntshoe (2002: 83) notes that globalisation 'is also associated with ideologies and hegemony of Westernisation, McDonaldisation, Americanisation, modernisation, internationalisation, industrialisation, development and underdevelopment'. Dale (2000: 427) states that 'Globalisation is variously taken as representing an ineluctable progress toward cultural homogeneity, as a set of forces that are making nation-states obsolete and that may result in something like a world polity'. Burbules and Torres (2001: 2), as editors, asked authors to focus on concepts that they believed to be central to the understanding of the concept of globalisation, and the concepts thus identified included neo-liberalism, the state, restructuring, reform, management, feminism, identity, citizenship, community, multiculturalism, new social movements, popular culture, and the local (as opposed to/in relation to the global). The range of practices that globalisation permeates seemingly points to the immensely pervasive nature of globalisation – to the understanding that the influence thereof is to be ignored at peril, lending credence to the inevitability thesis. In this regard, Giddens (2000: 35) states that, 'to oppose

economic globalisation, and to opt for economic protectionism, would be a misplaced tactic for rich and poor nations alike'. Rizvi and Lingard come to the conclusion that 'globalisation has no stipulative meaning; rather it is a politically and theoretically contested concept with both positive and negative expressions and responses' (2000: 6).

The debate about the apparent inevitability thesis of globalisation can possibly best be examined within an historical framework. One of the most popular explanations of the genesis of globalisation is the change in the nature of the world economy post-1945 (World War II). Known as Fordism, the notion in industry was for the production process to be broken into simple tasks, capable of being executed by unskilled labour. The relationship of the state to the economy and social structure in the Fordist period was such that 'State intervention had a Keynesian emphasis on full employment, public sector expenditure, welfare provision, social democracy and workers' rights (Hoogveldt, 1997: 46). This period saw a radical change in the nature of production, from a Fordist to a Post-Fordist mode of production. The change in the method of production signalled a different conceptualisation of the employee. Industry now demanded workers who were not necessarily unskilled, but rather multi-skilled; workers who were flexible and able to multitask. However, Ntshoe argues that in the inevitability thesis, globalisation is adopted and accepted uncritically as nation-states vie to participate and compete in the world market (Ntshoe, 2002: 83). Such competitiveness within the world market meant being able to provide multinational companies with the kind of workers they demanded, which in turn translated into nation-states demanding a certain type of basic education from primary education

(such as free basic education) through to encouraging higher education within the framework of globalisation.

This brings me to the question: How would acquiring the learning outcomes of the Economics curriculum in the FET phase serve as a strategy to orientate learners towards understanding the NEPAD goals? Firstly, if learners are expected to acquire knowledge, critical understanding and application of the principles, processes and practices of the economy, then the possibility exists that they would be taught about the socio-political conditions that have to be in place in order to ensure that, in the first place, the economy can function effectively. This means that they will have to be familiarised with how to consolidate democracy and sound economic management in Africa, which involves promoting peace, stability, people-centred development and accountability. Also, it would mean that learners will be familiarised with what it means to become empowered and to be self-reliant for the purpose of integrating African markets and economies into the global economy. The latter idea about NEPAD is consistent with the NCS and its emphasis on democratising knowledge to improve the human condition on the African continent.

Secondly, if learners are to be taught how to analyse the dynamics of the markets, they would be able to determine what the economic indicators ought to be in order to achieve and sustain a growth rate in the average domestic product (GDP) of over 7% per annum, as announced in the NEPAD policy documents (Adejumobi, 2003: 146). Learners are taught to analyse the GDP of economies in order to familiarise themselves with the process involved in calculating expenditure, production and

income. With the aid of interactive tutorials, learners in my classroom are taught the process of determining the gross domestic product of economies, on the basis of which they are also required to discuss and debate on the economic growth rate and development patterns of economies. I use the media to ensure that debates and discussions occur in which learners are required to compare the GDP of various economies, acquired from Internet finance reports and journals, and to discuss the levels of economic growth in rich, developed nations and in developing nations. Discussions are held about the annual South African Budget, during which I provide a summary of the budget acquired from the Internet and local newspapers. It is important for learners to analyse the South African budget to provide them with the opportunity to understand the government's reasons behind the budget allocations.

Thirdly, if learners have to develop a critical awareness of the policies and practices underpinning the improvement of the standard of living, then they would be better positioned to understand what it means to eradicate poverty in Africa. Also, to create an understanding of how to go about placing African countries on the path to sustainable growth and development in order to prevent Africa's marginalisation in the globalisation process becomes important.

In Grade 11 I provide learners with the opportunity to engage in discussions about globalisation, poverty and sustainable development, during which learners view the documentary called 'An Inconvenient Truth' by the Al Gore on sustainable development and global warming as an important factor in the lives of people is also discussed. Learners are shown the negative impact of climate change on the

environment in which we live and how we, as democratic and empowered individuals, need to respond to these issues by protesting against government policies on deregulation that encourage and entice multinational corporations who have little regard for the damage they cause to the environment through pollution. The documentary on sustainability is an important one for young Economics learners, as it aids them to critically analyse the environmental and economic impetus that affects the society. Learning takes place outside the classroom as well, as learners are exposed to the negative aspects of pollution on the environment. For example, the learners are taken to sites where pollution is rife to see for themselves how the destruction of the environment occurs, and what society is actually doing to challenge this phenomenon.

Fourthly, if learners are taught to apply a range of skills in dealing with contemporary economic issues they would be able to understand what it means to promote the role of women in all activities, reduce the proportion of people living in extreme poverty, make progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women, reduce infant and child mortality by two thirds (Adejumobi, 2003: 146), and implement national strategies for sustainable development so as to reverse the loss of environmental resources – all pertinent contemporary issues relevant to Africa's development. Providing the learners with video clips of poverty creates awareness in the Economics classroom about the causes and effects of poverty and what society needs to do to address this global phenomenon. The learners need to be empowered as future role players in society and acknowledge the role women play in a society devoid of discrimination or injustice. In providing images of poverty, the learners view

the effects that poverty has had on many African countries and see how the rich, developed nations continue to thrive in terms of economic growth and development. In fact, the global recession poses a real threat to developing nations. In Grade10, learners watch the documentary, 'The Gods Must Be Crazy', to provide them with an overview of the various stages of development and the impact that globalisation has on society and on the environment. The movie is educational in the sense that learners are educated about the traditional stage of development and what development entails, about the impact of modernity and how globalisation in turn affects society and in some cases has destroyed cultures of the past.

In essence, it seems as if the learning outcomes of the Economics curriculum are geared towards inculcating in learners capacities and skills to act critically, to analyse the dynamics of the markets, to improve the standard of living in society, and to deal with contemporary issues concerning the economy in relation to socio-political development. Despite these connections between the Economics learning outcomes and some of the goals of NEPAD, the latter has its shortcomings, which I shall now address.

What are the shortcomings of NEPAD? On the one hand, NEPAD is typically depicted by its architects as an attempt to address Africa's vast development challenges and as a development strategy and programme for the African Union (AU). However, NEPAD has also had to deal with a great deal of criticism (Landsberg, 2002: 1). Critics depict NEPAD as a 'neo-liberal' project and have called the economic strategy the 'Africanisation of GEAR' (Landsberg, 2002:1). NEPAD is

thus based on a trade-off, whereby the initiative seeks to establish a new partnership with the developed and industrialised nations of the North so as to involve them in efforts to relieve debt and to aid in the development of African countries through foreign investment (Landsberg, 2002: 1). NEPAD fails to address the fundamental issues of neo-liberalism and the eternal dependence of African leaders on Western powers (Karuuombe, 2003: 19). Also, NEPAD has in fact demonstrated how African leaders have internalised the International Monetary Fund and World Bank's policies, only to implement these in their own countries as 'home grown' African programmes (Karuuombe, 2003: 19). NEPAD is misleading in the sense that its approach is a search for better cooperation rather than a true partnership. This view is based on its neo-liberal ideological approach, by suggesting that Africa will in fact enter into a partnership with the West and other industrialised nations as being so called 'equal' partners (Karuuombe, 2003: 19).

Karuuombe (2003: 21) further argues that NEPAD fails to address the broader and more fundamental issues of women's marginalisation through discriminating laws and structures, land reform, male-biased development priorities, cultural norms and public expenditure. The development initiative fails to incorporate core labour standards into the administration of NEPAD, and fails to establish a formal internal structure to address issues of trade, development and core labour standards. It is clear that NEPAD has faced major criticism with regard to its policies in Africa and its role and partnership with Western nations in the undermining of African nations. Also, the impact that globalisation has had on the marginalised poor throughout Africa has caused greater concern for Africa's independence and whether the continent would



ever be able to achieve the level of economic development that NEPAD and its predecessors proposed.

Despite some of the inherent shortcomings of NEPAD, the FET Economics curriculum, and specifically the learning outcomes create space for learners to examine critically what the policy envisaged. It also allows learners to analyse how NEPAD has in many instances been unsuccessful in Africa (Landsberg, 2007: 2003). This brings me to an analysis of the New Growth Path (NGP) policy that grows out of NEPAD's failures.

### **3.3.5 New Growth Path (NGP)**

The lack of success of the RDP, GEAR, AsgiSA and NEPAD brought about a new look at development in the country. Economic dependency increased, with South Africa being reliant on more loans, which created more debt and did not augur well for job creation in the country (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 1). In June 2009, President Jacob Zuma stated that the key elements of the plan of action of the New Growth Path involved the creation of decent work, which would influence the attraction of investment and job creation initiatives (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 1). The NGP combines macroeconomic and microeconomic interventions by identifying viable changes in the structure and character of production that could generate a more inclusive and greener economy over the medium to long term (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 1).

The NGP has set a target for employment creation through numerous job drivers that include infrastructure, the main economic sectors, the potential of new economies, investments in social capital and public services, and spatial development. If one looks at the link between these job drivers and the FET Economics curriculum, it is evident that learners are exposed to these job drivers as important concepts in each of the four modules of the NCS. For instance, in the case of spatial development, learners are exposed to the development that occurs in rural areas of South Africa in order to foster sustainable development and encourage growth within various regions of great potential. It is important for learners to be equipped with the knowledge of these job drivers to ensure that the future skilled workers of this economy are well aware of what is required of them to aid South Africa in growth and development. The NGP states that the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries alone can generate around 60 000 additional direct jobs by 2015 and around 150 000 by 2020, with additional employment growth arising from South Africa's position as a financial, logistics and services hub, and from collaboration on regional infrastructure and investment (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 14).

Emphasis is again placed on employment, where employment opportunities are anticipated at around 260 000 jobs through nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), stokvels and co-ops (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 13). The public service could also generate 100 000 jobs in health, education and policing by 2020, as well as substantial opportunities through public employment schemes (Republic of South Africa, 2010:13). Learners are exposed to these organisations in the Economics curriculum (NCS, 2003: 12) and, through discussion, debates and the use of the

media, engage with one another on the viability of these nongovernmental organisations in assisting with employment growth in South Africa.

Important job drivers such as those of infrastructure and the main economic sectors are also linked to the Economics curriculum. Infrastructural development can be an important catalyst for job creation and economic growth – the latter being aspects that constitute economic development; learners are familiarised with the importance of this factor for economic growth. It is estimated that, by 2015, 250 000 jobs could be created by public investment in energy, transport, water and communications infrastructure and in housing (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 10). In terms of the three main sectors of the economy, namely the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors, great emphasis is placed within the framework of the NGP on the creation of jobs in agriculture and manufacturing. An estimated 250 000 jobs are expected to be created in the tourism industry and business services, with many more possible in the cultural industries (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 11). Learners are actively engaged in this topic of the importance of the three main sectors of the economy (NCS, 2003: 12-14), and how each sector contributes to the GDP of the country. They also learn about the importance of these sectors in international trade between South Africa and the rest of the world.

Lastly, the NGP targets 100 000 new jobs by 2020 in the knowledge-intensive sectors of ICT, higher education, health care, mining-related technologies, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 13). It is important for South Africa to adapt existing technologies that will support large-scale

employment creation and improved livelihoods (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 13). This driving force of the NGP is evident in the Economics curriculum, when new and old methods of technology are taught and how the former are used to ensure greater efficiency in resource allocation and the production of many goods and services for South African consumers. It is important for learners to be exposed to the methods of technology and the knowledge acquired by various industries in South Africa.

The NGP is intended to address the socioeconomic issues of unemployment, inequality and poverty with the goal of creating jobs, primarily in the private sector (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 8). With a projected reduction in unemployment from 25% to 15%, the NGP and its policy makers hold high expectations of a new economic programme succeeding where previous economic programmes for South Africa were unable to achieve their goals or meet the demands of an ever-changing scenario.

The government has high expectations of its new economic growth path, through which it is hoping to create five million jobs by 2020 – a growth rate that is unlikely to materialise given the current state of the global economic slowdown (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 9). The NGP is also concerned that growth was debt financed and not underpinned by a strong production base, as South Africans were seen as spending more than what they earned, which is similar to what led to the eventual collapse of the Greek economy in Europe. The NGP, however, proposes a ‘developmental state’ to support new productive activities in terms of manufacturing,

mining, agricultural supply chains and in a range of knowledge-intensive and skill-intensive activities, as well as in green technology (Nattrass, 2011: 2).

The strategy of the NGP would be to identify and support economic activities that have the potential to create large numbers of well-paid formal jobs in which workers have training, access to benefits and, most importantly, contracts. This seems to be an even more daunting challenge than achieving an annual real growth rate of 6% (Nattrass, 2011: 3).

The NGP identifies the key economic problems facing South Africa as being that of a high unemployment rate; low levels of saving and investment by local citizens; persistent balance of payment deficits caused by overspending on imports compared to lower levels of exports; an overvalued exchange rate; skilled labour shortages; energy and infrastructural bottlenecks; economic concentration; government inefficiency; and rent-seeking and regulatory burdens on business (Nattrass, 2011: 3). The NGP acknowledges, however, that these weaknesses need to be addressed, but fails to provide any clear direction for how this, along with better co-ordination of government policy, is to be achieved (Nattrass, 2011: 3).

Also, the NGP assumes, as has been stated before, that most of the projected new jobs will come from the private sector, and that these jobs will be leveraged through targeted assistance for the five identified key 'job drivers'. However, it is unclear what the status of these job estimates are and, as the NGP itself states, they are not set in concrete and a 'mapping process' is being used to think innovatively about new

opportunities for job creation (Nattrass, 2011: 3). The question that the NGP needs to ask is whether the private sector will create decent work and deliver the 'inclusive' growth path the NGP so hopes for. The NGP presumes that precarious employment in the fields of construction, commerce, catering and the accommodation sectors has the lowest average earnings per employee compared to other sectors of the South African economy, and therefore does not count as 'decent work'. It is evident that these jobs would probably, but not necessarily, contribute to the improvement of the quality of existing jobs, but certainly at the cost of rapid employment growth for the less skilled (Nattrass, 2011: 4).

In addition, the NGP envisages that foreign exchange is to be purchased by printing money, which in turn would be inflationary, causing the real exchange rate to appreciate unless the government implements a restrictive fiscal policy in order to control demand in the economy (Nattrass, 2011: 7). The NGP states that the monetary policy will continue to target low and stable inflation, yet the economic policy favours the lowering of interest rates, which in turn would dampen the flow of foreign capital into the bond market, thereby depreciating the currency and further boosting inflationary pressures (Nattrass, 2011: 7). The NGP is rather unclear on how government expenditure is to be managed or for how long the NGP's list of new policies and interventions can be made to correspond with an expanding social wage and tight fiscal policy (Nattrass, 2011: 7). Failure by the NGP to confront the trade-offs between wages, employment, productivity and profitability is disappointing, in the sense that it is particularly short on detail and long on wishful thinking (Nattrass, 2011: 8). There have been constraints on the NGP's proposals, particularly due to

government inefficiency and excessive wage growth. Although it is clear that the NGP has negotiations and partnerships with the private sector and labour on the table, the challenge facing the NGP is to rise to the occasion and make the best of these (Nattrass, 2011: 8).

With a new economic growth path with high expectations, hopes and a vision for an improved economy, the NGP is faced with many challenges in achieving its goals, including the fact that previous development initiatives and economic programmes, such as the RDP, GEAR, NEPAD and AsgiSA, failed to deliver what the NGP hopes to achieve for South Africa.

In conclusion, I shall now examine how the learning outcomes possibly connect with some of the goals of the NGP policy. Firstly, considering that the macroeconomics learning outcome addresses the three sectors of the economy (primary, secondary and tertiary) and the NGP regards growth in these sectors as important for job creation, economic development, building infrastructure and trade relations, it can be said that this Economics learning outcome does connect with some of the goals of the NGP. Secondly, the microeconomics learning outcome emphasises establishing new industries and markets, whereas the NGP relies on the private sector to invest in promoting small business enterprises that will foster and sustain job creation. In this way, teaching learners microeconomics is in some way connected to the realisation of an important goal of the NGP. Thirdly, the economic pursuits learning outcome focuses on the RDP, GEAR, AsgiSA, NEPAD and trade relations, whereas the NGP aims to improve on the aforementioned economic policies. By implication, there is a

link between teaching the economic pursuits (NCS, 2003: 11) and contributing to the realisation of an important goal of the NGP – that is, to improve on the previous less successful economic policies. Fourthly, the contemporary economic issues outcome focuses primarily on globalisation, sustainable development and issues of poverty, inflation and unemployment, whereas the NGP attempts to resolve such issues by creating more jobs. Thus, the FET Economics curriculum is congruent with creating some practical understanding of GDFs.

In the next chapter I shall examine how these learning outcomes would enable learners to embark on democratic action that can create conditions for the pursuit of economic development. My motivation for taking this line of thought is influenced by the fact that the GDFs primarily emphasise the promotion of democracy and economic development on the African continent, including in South Africa.

### **3.4 Summary**

In this chapter I have shown how the Economics curriculum for Grades 10 to 12, and more specifically the learning outcomes of the Economics curriculum, resonate with aspects of the RDP, GEAR, AsgiSA, NEPAD and NGP – referred to in this thesis as Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs). In turn, with reference to my own teaching and professional development, I have shown how knowledge and skills can be acquired to achieve the learning outcomes, which then can make an understanding of, and insight into the economic policy frameworks and their objectives a real possibility.





## **CHAPTER 4**

### **ECONOMICS EDUCATION AND THE CULTIVATION OF DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter I offered an account of how the four learning outcomes of the current Economics curriculum for Grades 10 to 12 in South African schools align with the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs), in particular inculcating in learners the capacities for critical understanding, analysis of market dynamics, improvement of living standards, and engagement with contemporary economic issues. In addition, I have also emphasised the importance of realising some of the democratic goals of the GDFs for (South) Africa's economic, social and political development. I shall now elucidate how learning outcomes would enable learners to embark on democratic action that can create conditions for the pursuit of economic development, considering that the primary emphasis of the GDFs is to consolidate democracy and promote economic development. Following this, I shall introduce the notion of social justice that seems to be an important goal of the GDFs and FET learning outcomes.

Before I tackle the issue of how conditions can be created for the pursuit of economic development, I need to explore what democratic action entails in relation to important theoretical understandings. Since the promulgation of South Africa's new Constitution

in 1994 the Bill of Rights (as part of the Constitution) has heavily influenced the GDFs. And considering that democratic action is a key feature of both the Constitution and GDFs it would be salient to analyse the former (democratic action).

## **4.2 Theoretical Understandings of Democratic Action**

In this section I examine some of the meanings that underscore democratic action with the aim to point out later on how economic development can be harnessed through democracy, in particular indicating how the four learning outcomes in Economics, can effect democratic action.

### **4.2.1 Democratic Action and Participation**

Horace Mann influenced public schooling in the United States as an existing part of the communal landscape and articulated certain principles that continue to animate the discourse about public schools (Glass, 2009: 9; Osler, 2004: 24). Mann, following Glass, voiced a dream of a new society, of a participatory democracy and a bottom-up approach in which public schools would develop active citizens as independent beings capable of acting upon their own decisions (Glass, 2009: 9; Osler, 2004: 26).

Mann goes on to mention that, since democracy required the participation of all men and women in governing, this entailed that citizens embody an independence of judgement that made them like 'mountains that move the wind rather than blowing whichever way along with the wind' (Glass, 2009: 10; Osler, 2004: 28). In many

public schools in South Africa, certainly at the school where I teach, we find many learners unable to act on this view of Mann, as many merely accept what is taught to them in the curriculum as the correct way and that no one should oppose or challenge the curriculum. As Economics learners within a democracy, it is important to be critical about what is being taught in the curriculum. Economics as a social science should encourage learners to be active citizens and to act democratically by allowing them to actively engage in debates and discussions. Only if there were forms of debates and discussions at schools and in the workplace would individuals be encouraged to voice their opinions and to actively participate in democratic action.

Just as Mann envisioned schools as the mechanism for forming a new democratic society, reformers later envisioned schools as the solution to a wide range of social and cultural problems affecting society. The hope was that this would facilitate the necessary changes in the values, attitudes and behaviours of the 'new student-citizen-worker' (Glass, 2009: 10). The Economics curriculum for Grades 10 to 12 encourages learners to develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes required to be active participants. Here, I specifically refer to the requirement that learners analyse natural resources (for example, land and the environment, labour, capital, the entrepreneur), community participation in local economic planning and activities, access of economically marginalised groups (for example, empowerment and procurement procedures). In a democratic society that would influence the work habits of these individuals as future citizens, their relationship with their family members, the community, modern sources and justifications for legitimate authority,

modern time and space orientations, modern modes of recreation and pleasure (Glass, 2009: 10).

Also, John Dewey argued that schools should in fact be living social experiments for learners in a democratic practice, preparing learners for a future role in society. He argued that the curriculum should not be prepackaged and separate from the interests and needs of learners, but should be intimately associated with them through genuine problem-solving activities (Dewey in Glass, 2009: 11). It is important for policy holders and policymakers to adopt a curriculum that would encourage learners to be actively involved in the development of their own curriculum, where through feedback they would allow these policy makers to adopt a curriculum that would be worthwhile for all parties involved. In essence, learners are expected to be actively involved in democratic action and participation through a curriculum that would be taught and whose outcomes will hopefully be implemented in society. Moreover, Dewey also argued that free, open, critical dialogue among diverse groups of individuals or points of view could possibly provide conditions for warranted knowledge and a participatory democratic life. It is important for learners to engage in debates and discussions in a democratic environment that would shape their ideas and perceptions of events affecting society and how contemporary issues that affect the economy as a whole are deliberated on. Through the FET Economics curriculum, learners are constantly exposed to the issues of scarcity and choice, which are the fundamental principles underlining the study of Economics. As Dewey (in Glass, 2009:12) explains, learners need to engage with one another to discuss methods of

ensuring that resources are used efficiently and that choices are made to ensure that the opportunity costs incurred benefit the party involved to his or her best interest

In addition, Paulo Freire argued that the deepest human capacities for producing language, knowledge, culture and history suggest that a participatory, just democracy is the form of life most supportive of each individual and community being able to realise their own full potential (Freire in Glass, 2009: 14). Democratic education must encourage and liberate those who have been oppressed to exercise their human power to shape their own future through their own involvement in the production of knowledge, language, culture and history (Glass, 2009: 14; Osler, 2004: 30). Educators and learners, who are the active participants in and in fact engaged in the curriculum should be allowed to create and contribute towards a curriculum that would shape their own beliefs about the importance of their language, culture and history. Only when those who implement the curriculum are actively involved can we say that the curriculum itself encourages democratic action.

Most learners recognise the importance of educational success and how necessary it is for economic and social success after school. They realise that life at school, which includes punctuality, obedience to role authority, passive completion of assigned tasks, accommodation of hierarchical relations, and differentiated extrinsic reward systems, is related to life on the job (Glass, 2009: 16). Through the Economics curriculum, learners are exposed to the real world, including choices in terms of finances and investment resources in terms of basic necessities that would essentially satisfy the needs of individuals. Also, through the Economics curriculum,

learners are exposed to the constantly changing economic environment and how it could impact the lifestyles of individuals.

Only when every individual is enabled to be the unique 'somebody' (s)he wants to be can schools foster the formation of citizens who will have an enduring commitment to creating just and democratic societies (Glass, 2009: 25; Osler, 2004: 48). Every learner at school should be treated fairly and equally in a democratic school in order for democratic action and participation to be fostered. The FET Economics learning outcomes encourage learners to participate in and beyond pedagogical classroom activities. Hence, learning outcomes create spaces for the enactment of democracy.

#### **4.2.2 Democratic Action and Responsibility**

The right to education and the right to schooling can be linked closely to an understanding that complex societies and their institutions impact on young people. Understanding this connection is important in the sense that these societies must ensure that these young individuals are properly initiated into school life, their understandings, and values critical to their learning, and where schools are in fact seen as the most efficient vehicle for achieving this (Katz, 2009: 33; Colby, Beaumont, Ehrlich and Corngold, 2007: 22). It is thus the responsibility of democratic schools to foster and develop young individuals to be able to develop their own responsibility and thus know their place in society. Katz (2009: 35) posits that the notion of education as the right to be prepared properly to assume the roles and responsibilities of adults in society conforms to two important points of view. The first

of these conforms to a broad, meaningful sense of education as a process of inclusion. The second is linked to the idea that parents and the state share responsibilities in aiding the transition of transition to adulthood (Katz, 2009: 35; Colby, *et al.* 2007: 24). In the second view, democratic action and responsibility are closely linked, in the sense that democratic individuals, who would include parents and teachers, have a responsibility to aid the development of the youth into respectable and reflective beings in society. Likewise, in a recent study, Arends and Phurutse (2009: 43-45) found that educators in many South African disadvantaged schools are thrust into classrooms without the necessary support and mentorship; and school managers are not always critical and reflective enough about their staff and this poses serious challenges to school improvement initiatives. It follows from this that democratic action is required in such schools.

Amy Gutmann emphasises democratic character, which embodies the important values of non-repression, non-discrimination and tolerance, as well as the disposition and skills required to employ critical reasoning to resolve fundamental principles in non-violent ways (Katz, 2009: 35). As democratic individuals it is their (citizens') responsibility to ensure that these important values are enacted upon in today's complex society, in the work place and at schools in order to ensure that people are treated fairly and equally. The FET Economics curriculum orientates learners to act in a responsible manner in a democratic society, since learners are encouraged to debate on issues pertaining to society. Here, I specifically refer to the curricular content such as for learners to evaluate the role of the public sector in the economy with special reference to its socioeconomic responsibility in the South African context



considering the presence of corruption and maladministration in the public sector. In each of the four learning outcomes, learners are exposed to events that occur in society based on what is taught to them in the curriculum and what is exposed to them through the media. It thus is the responsibility of teachers and learners to ensure that the latter's transition is to adulthood of a good nature, and that, at school and in the curriculum, learners are taught the importance of values, morals and ethics that will have an impact on their future as democratic citizens in the workplace and in society.

#### **4.2.3 Democratic Action and Respect for Diversity**

Multicultural history explores the past from the many disparate perspectives of those whose lives were invisible in the old patriotic story of great men, great wars, and ceaseless moral progress (Callan, 2009: 64; Bajpai, 2007: 18). Multicultural history is important because it teaches us as individuals the history of both the rich and the poor. Multiculturalism explores the diversity of individuals in society, in order for individuals to be taught about the diverse cultures, history and races. In terms of patriotic history, Callan argues that a distinctive political morality should be brought to the venture of patriotic history that insists on freedom and equality for all within a democratic community in which citizens are respected in their cultural particularity within limits fixed by norms of mutual respect and civility (Callan, 2009: 68). Only there is respect for one another along the dimensions of diversity can there be a democratic society.

Also, it is only through history that students as future citizens can know how civic ideals can be enacted and betrayed in the messy, morally ambiguous world of the nation state whose future they will inherit (Callan, 2009: 68; Bajpai, 2007: 24). Patriotic history is thus an integral part of the lives of many individuals at schools, as it teaches them the values, knowledge and attitudes required to act as civil citizens in a just and democratic society. The Economics curriculum also creates opportunities for learners to be initiated into practices that would allow them to cope with a democratically diverse society. Here, I specifically refer to the Economics curriculum's intent to sensitise learners towards issues of poverty, inequality, race, gender, language, age and disability, as well as recognising the wide diversity of knowledge systems through which people make sense of and attach meaning to the world in which they live. For this reason, the learning outcomes can be said to create opportunities to engage in democratic action, because democratic action is dependent upon being initiated into practices that encourage diversity.

#### **4.2.4 Democratic Action and Inclusion**

Pericles defined democracy as the situation in which 'power is in the hands not of a minority but of the whole people' (Held in Biesta, 2009: 101). Aristotle spoke about democracy as the 'rule of all over each other and of each by turns over all' (Biesta, 2009: 101). The whole point of democracy is its emphasis on the inclusion of everyone in the ruling of society, and it could well be argued that inclusion is in essence one of the core values of democracy (Biesta, 2009: 101; Young, 2002: 14).

The question regarding inclusion is how we can make our democratic practices even more inclusive and how we can include even more people in the sphere of democratic deliberation (Biesta, 2009: 107; Young, 2002: 26). The assumption underlying this issue of inclusion is that we as individuals should become even more attentive to 'otherness' and 'difference', which would lead to a situation in which total democratic inclusion would be reached and democracy would become 'normal' (Biesta, 2009: 107). As individuals we need to respect one another and value each individual's contributions to society, in which democracy would ensure that those who in fact could make meaningful contributions to society are included in the sphere of democratic inclusion. The second assumption regarding inclusion is that it is in fact a process that happens 'from the inside out', a process that emanates from the position of those who are already considered to be democratic (Biesta, 2009: 107). This assumption underlines the fact that there is someone who is setting the terms for inclusion and it is for those who wish to be included to meet those terms (Biesta, 2009: 107). There need to be rules set out in order to ensure that a particular outcome is carried out correctly, and rules and terms need to be set with regard to inclusion so that those who are included in debates and discussions ensure that democracy is enacted. This means that individuals respect one another and value one another's judgements, and that deliberation occurs.

It is important to include learners and teachers in the development of the FET Economics curriculum, as these parties would contribute to the greater feedback required for the curriculum to undergo the necessary changes that would benefit all. In a way, I was empowered through cluster meetings and moderations on Economics

as I engaged with other teachers and the curriculum advisor about the current curriculum and what was required of us as teachers in order to ensure that a positive climate of learning was experienced by learners in the classroom. Also, these meetings would allow teachers to deliberate with one another in order to learn from the experiences and practices of other teachers in the workplace. Another important aspect of inclusion is that learners should not be taught content knowledge primarily. In fact, the learning outcomes for Economics are considered as flexible, making allowances for the inclusion of local inputs. These young individuals should be taught to be reflective practitioners in the classroom, and this can only be done if they are empowered through inclusion by allowing them to engage in class debates and discussions.

#### **4.2.5 Democracy and Deliberation**

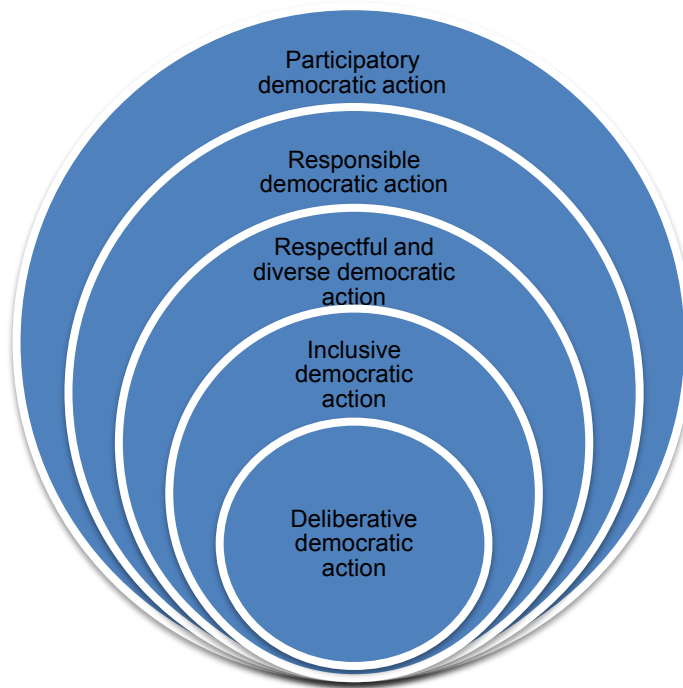
The term inclusion can be closely linked with that of deliberation, as both are integral components of democracy. Deliberation is not simply a form of political decision making, but a form of political communication. The inclusion question is therefore not so much a question about who should be included, but first and foremost a question about who is able to participate effectively in deliberation (Biesta, 2009: 105). Young (2002) argues that there should be promotion of respect and trust in deliberative practices, and that understanding should be made possible across structural and cultural difference (Biesta, 2009: 105).

Young (in Biesta, 2009: 105) goes on to mention that greeting or public acknowledgement is important for those who have conflicts to recognise others included in the discussion, especially where there are conflicting interests, opinions and social locations that affect the parties involved. Young emphasises that greeting should be thought of as a 'starting point' for political interaction (Biesta, 2009: 106). Young also goes on to mention that a second means of political communication for deliberation is through rhetoric, as it helps to get particular issues on the agenda, and to articulate claims and arguments in ways appropriate to a particular public in a particular situation (Biesta, 2009: 106). What follows from the afore-mentioned explanation of democratic action, is that an understanding of the GDFs in particular how it should be implemented cannot materialise without invoking of deliberation in the public sphere, in this instance, schools.

Young makes mention of narrative or storytelling, where the main function of narrative in democratic communication lies in its potential 'to foster understanding among members of a polity with very different experience or assumptions about what is important' (Biesta, 2009: 106). Young (in Glass, 2009: 106) goes on to stress the importance that deliberative democracy entails and that 'participants require the reasons of one another and critically evaluate them'. As individuals in a democratic society we need to critically evaluate the reasons of others and, at the same time, to listen to their reasons in order to show respect for them. Deliberation would allow us as individuals to listen to our own reasons and to critically evaluate ourselves in terms of what is correct and regarded as valid and valuable to particular discussions at hand. In a democratic environment, deliberation and inclusion are important core

components required to ensure that society is fair and non-discriminatory and that there is equality among all members. The Economics learning outcomes create opportunities to engage learners in deliberation, for instance, to deliberate about whether redress should be considered as part of the RDP or issues in GEAR. Hence the learning outcomes do establish moments of democratic action, for instance, redress as part of the RDP and policy issues in GEAR that can foster deliberation and hence democratic action.

Now that I have shown what democratic action involves, more specifically how democratic action is linked to and guided by participation, responsibility, respect for diversity, inclusion and deliberation (as illustrated in Figure 2 below), I need to examine some explanations of economic development before determining whether the Economics learning outcomes for Grades 10 to 12 can create conditions for its enactment.



**Figure 3: Forms of Democratic Action**

### **4.3 Views on Economic Development**

Development can be regarded as ‘a process of improving people’s lives’ (Kabuya, 2011: 2). In sub-Saharan Africa, development should involve ‘the ability to meet basic needs and to sustain economic growth, alleviation of poverty, creation of wealth, and economic freedom ... a change in living standards, quality of life, women’s status and a change of people’s attitude to work’ (Kabuya, 2011: 2). Considering the aforementioned, economic development (in South Africa) has to be a measure for gauging the economic wellbeing of the population and ought to reflect the economic output (for example, agricultural and industrial), infrastructure (for example, power and transportation facilities), physical health and level of education, and cultural, political, legal and economic differences in governance (Kabuya, 2011: 2). Bearing in

mind that economic development has to do with the economic wellbeing, output, infrastructure, health, education, political and cultural aspects of people's lives, development also depends on how well the aforementioned are managed. In other words, economic development depends on 'good governance' (Kabuya, 2011: 2).

Moreover, the literature on development abounds and the following view on development stands out: Development is economic development, and the latter is equated with economic growth. Development is considered as 'good change' in the realm of ecology, economics and all spheres of societal, political and cultural life (Chambers in Ngowi, 2009: 260). Other views include the following: Seers (in Ngowi, 2009: 260) posits that economic development means creating conditions to realise human potential, reduce poverty and social inequalities, and create employment opportunities; secondly, Todaro (in Ngowi, 2009: 260) views economic development as bringing about major changes to social structures and national institutions, accelerating growth, reducing inequality and eradicating poverty; thirdly, Zdeck (in Ngowi, 2009: 261) views economic development as creating jobs and assets, establishing an investment climate in distressed communities and providing access to quality education, social services and decent housing; fourthly, Ngowi (2009: 260) views economic development as a dynamic and fluid process that involves growth and change in relation to improved performance of the factors of production and production techniques. For this thesis, my interest is in economic development as a process of improvement in the living conditions of people (such as better housing, health care, education and job opportunities), protection of the environment and people, and the enhancement of the political and social wellbeing of people. And,



considering that economic development is dependent on 'good governance', it would not be inappropriate to claim that the cultivation of democratic action is a necessary condition to ensure that economic development has some chance of being realised or worked towards. Before I examine how the learning outcomes of the Grades 10 to 12 Economics curriculum can contribute towards cultivating in learners a sense of democratic action, I shall examine whether the learning outcomes can make some contribution in working towards the attainment of economic development. However, I shall firstly examine another view of economic development that links up with my own research interest. This view of economic development is linked to a notion of development that places human agency at the core of development activities such as to improve the socio-political, cultural and economic conditions of people. For this reason I am attracted to the notion of development as espoused by Amartya Sen.

#### **4.3.1 Sen's Notion of Economic Development**

Amartya Kumar Sen, currently one of the most prominent intellectuals in the world and Nobel Laureate for Economic Science in 1998, has made indelible contributions to welfare economics, poverty and the causes of famine, and development studies in relation to capabilities, democracy and freedom (Corbridge, 2002: 1-20). The bases of Sen's account of 'development as freedom' are threefold: firstly, Sen (2000: xii) depicts (economic) development as 'the removal of various types of unfreedoms that leave people with little choice and little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency'; secondly, social opportunities for education and health care complement individual opportunities for economic and political participation, which also help 'to

foster own initiatives in overcoming our respective deprivations' (Sen, 2000: xii); and thirdly, a person should have 'the liberty to participate in public discussion and scrutiny' (Sen, 2000: 3) that will help them choose their own accounts of a good quality of life. My interest in Sen's analysis of (economic) development as freedom is attentive to the freedom individuals should exercise in improving human wellbeing – that is, improving the living conditions of people, their education, health care and socio-political wellbeing, and protecting the environment that is central to their freedom. This means that the wellbeing of a person is seen as constitutive of a person's functioning and capabilities, that is, what a person is able to do or be, for instance, the ability to be well-nourished, to avoid escapable morbidity or mortality, to read, write and communicate, to take part in the life of the community, and to appear in public without shame (Giri, 2000: 1005). It follows from the aforementioned freedom-centred perspective that (economic) development is guided by the freedom that human beings are the most important means and end of development. Hence, if people want to ensure economic development, they have to be free and improve their capabilities through communication and participation in the social welfare activities that can improve people's lives.

Democratic action, as I have explained earlier, can contribute towards the achievement of such a form of economic development – that is, one that draws on the freedoms of human agents. This brings me to a discussion of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Millennium Goals which, to some extent, incorporate aspects of Sen's work on (economic) development as freedom. This forms part of my interest for the reason that development as freedom implies

that people should embark on democratic action as a manifestation of human agency.

#### **4.3.2 United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals**

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is aimed at building the capacity of developing countries for sustainable human development by promoting and supporting efforts to alleviate poverty, managing natural resources to the benefit both people and the environment, improving governance and creating opportunities for people to improve their lives (United Nations Development Programme, 1997: 1). Established by the UN General Assembly in November 1965, the UNDP allocates 58% of all its resources to 'least developed' countries. Since 1990, the UNDP has focussed on two central themes, namely sustainable development and human development under the aegis of sustainable human development (SHD). These involve the following: to generate and distribute growth benefits equitably; to empower people instead of marginalising them; to enlarge people's choices and opportunities; to regenerate the environment rather than destroy it; and to enhance citizens' participation in decisions affecting their lives (United Nations Development Programme, 1997: 3). Thus, the UNDP promotes people-centred sustainable development initiatives through actively promoting effective participation by all stakeholders. Here one can see the importance of the freedoms of people to participate in sustainable development activities. By implication, the UNDP seems to incorporate aspects of Sen's work on the role of human beings in (economic) development. In the main, the UNDP aims to ensure poverty eradication, good

governance, gender equity, environmental sustainability, capacity building and technological advancement (United Nations Development Programme, 1997: 4-15).

At the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000, the international community (147 nation states) reached consensus on working to achieve eight critical economic and social development priorities by 2015. The eight United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are the following: (1) reduce extreme hunger and poverty by half relative to 1990; (2) achieve universal primary education; (3) promote gender equality and the empowerment of women; (4) reduce child mortality by two-thirds relative to 1990; (5) improve maternal health, including reducing maternal mortality by three-quarters relative to 1990; (6) prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases; (7) ensure environmental sustainability; and (8) develop a global partnership for development (United Nations Millennium Development Goals, 2005). Since the MDGs became a priority for the UN, many of the poorest regions of the world, most notably in sub-Saharan Africa, are far off track to meet the goals, yet the MDGs are still achievable (Sachs & McArthur, 2005: 347). Although remarkable improvements have been made throughout South Asia (accommodating more than half of the world's population), sub-Saharan Africa is in a crisis as a result of extreme poverty, shockingly high child and maternal mortality, and poor governance (Sachs & McArthur, 2005: 348). In this thesis my interest is in educating learners to look critically at what, why and how citizens should act in order to ensure that their societal and political endeavours are not misdirected. In fact, learners should be made aware of how to deal critically with those aspects that can help them think differently about economic development in their countries, especially considering the

development projects of the UN and the concomitant MDGs. Before I pay more attention to the learning outcomes of the FET Economics curriculum, in particular to how learners can contribute towards economic development, it would be salient to consider the trajectory that economic development has already assumed in South Africa.

#### **4.3.3 Economic Development in Africa**

Without being too alarmist, I want to introduce this section by outlining why 'Africa has not realised its potential', with reference to the work of Greg Mills (2010: 2). Mills (2010: 6-7) claims that African economic development experienced a long-term trend of very low economic growth and a rapidly increasing population. According to the World Bank, Africa had to grow at 7% to make inroads into poverty, whereas its growth is at 5% (Mills, 2010: 6). Africans south of the Sahara are still the poorest people in the world, with an average annual income of \$1,681 –50% less than the next poorest people, from South Asia (Mills, 2010: 6). Africans have the lowest life expectancy in the world and the highest rate of infant mortality, which 'reflected consistently low real economic growth across the continent, and lack of opportunity for Africans, as well as a range of other problems including poor governance, high rates of conflict, and widespread corruption' (Mills, 2010: 6).

Africa's relatively low population density has also played a role in its economic underdevelopment. 'Africa has historically lacked the critical mass of skilled people to participate in development, especially required in the cities, resulting in high labour

costs and low economic growth' (Mills, 2010: 15). But Africa's economic underdevelopment is not because its people do not work hard. Instead, their productivity is low because of a variety of factors, such as poor health and a lack of skills, inefficient land use, and an unemployed and uneducated youth (Mills, 2010: 2, 13). Africa's economic underdevelopment therefore can be attributed to a range of problems, of which the most significant are poor governance and bad choices by its leaders, high rates of conflict, insecurity and widespread corruption (Mills, 2010: 7). And this is where my thesis seems to be relevant, in the sense that 'a relative lack of democracy (or single-party dominance) in Africa', caused mostly by its leadership, with their 'big man chieftain styles of rule, dispensing favours and using all manner of tools to bolster their rule, from traditional governance structures to kinship ties' (Mills, 2010: 14-15). So, despite Africa's greatest natural assets, such as wealth in oil, the lack of democratic governance and accountability on the part of its leadership has contributed largely to its economic underdevelopment.

Moreover, as has been mentioned earlier, the quality of the cultural, social and political lives of the people of Africa has been hard hit by poverty and diseases, and this has caused development to move at a very slow pace in the last decades (Langmia, 2005: 144). The issue of network technology has been one of the fundamental problems affecting development in Africa since the 1960s (Langmia, 2005: 144), and the entire notion of the digital divide between developed and developing nations has affected development in Africa immensely (Wilkins, in Langmia, 2005: 144). Limb (in Langmia, 2005: 145) goes on to argue that new strategies for digital publishing, preservation and access to publications are evolving

among Africans and Africanists, but they face daunting problems. Mtiku and Dirk (in Langmia, 2005: 146) argue that third world countries are currently dominated by neo-colonialism and, in their view, local leaders in Africa are political elites who are advocating conservative capitalist values and are thus driven by mutual self-interest with the Western capitalist nations. They go on to argue that African politicians are lured by self-centred motives when endorsing foreign investments in the continent (Langmia, 2005: 146). The slow pace of economic growth in Africa thus is blamed on national leaders who still have a neo-colonial mentality. The view is that the developed nations of the north should still design and implement developmental programmes in Africa, although most of the time this implementation is are marred by inefficiencies and corruption, as profits are diverted into private bank accounts in Europe (Langmia, 2005: 150).

Prior to improving the lives of the African people, the colonisers of Africa used assimilationist and acculturation tactics to get African people to imitate Western ways of life. The British, for example, were prone to maintaining existing cultures, provided that the inhabitants of Cameroon, Ghana, Nigerian, Sierra Leone and other colonies abided by Western standards (Melkote, in Langmia, 2005: 146). Modernisation theory made it possible for Western ideals and modes of life to replace Africa's pre-existing cultural modes (Ake, in Langmia, 2005: 147), and the Western method of education was regarded as the way to being literate and resolving the problems of ignorance and the so-called 'primitive' behaviours of the native African (Langmia, 2005: 147). The French took a different approach that involved assimilation, which was the

tendency to rid the Africans off from abiding to their social, economic and political systems of governance (Langmia, 2005: 147).

African connectivity problems are the result of peculiar socio-economic conditions in the region, where many nations continue to suffer from badly performing economies, high foreign debt, declining resources and social infrastructures, alarming population growth, increased dependency, degradation of the environment and other debilitating conditions, and these have direct implications for the implementation of networking projects and the type of public policies that foster connectivity in Africa (Adam, in Langmia, 2005: 149). Africa needs to tackle these issues before bringing in technology to help with the development of the continent (Langmia, 2005: 149). One of the ways in which most Africans can benefit from the new technology without falling prey to the digital divide syndrome is to create telecentres, which would bring people together to meet in specifically designed areas to communicate with others at home and abroad (Langmia, 2005: 149). Senegal has adopted this approach, with many telecentres that are found in both urban and rural areas, and this initiative could be interpreted as a way to promote democracy in society (Langmia, 2005: 149).

Adams (in Langmia, 2005: 151) suggests that, in order for Africa to use the internet as a tool for development, the continent should first of all tackle the fundamental problems of debt and declining resources. The issue of Africa's debt burden can be overcome through the equitable distribution of scarce human resources, such as wealth from oil. A country such as Nigeria, for example, is currently undergoing an oil crisis because of government officials and oil companies looting the wealth and



sidelining the people of the Niger Delta, who should in fact be the country's primary beneficiaries (Langmia, 2005: 151). Also, the purpose of economic development in Africa through the creation of telecentres for the continent's goods and services is for the continent to sell ethnic goods to the many Europeans residing within their countries. This would result in rapid increases in turnover rates for the African continent. The only problems lie with transportation and security, and with the low level of accountability, the breakdown in communication and the poor quality of the products from the continent, which makes it difficult for Africa to achieve the dream of technological revolution (Langmia, 2005: 151).

This brings me to a discussion of economic development in South Africa, with emphasis on the economy and local economic development (LED).

#### **4.3.4 Economic Development in South Africa**

Since 1994 the South African economy has shown some degree of expansion in particular regarding the sustained growth of the black middle class (Malikane, 2007: 67). Post-1994, there has been an improved economic growth performance in South Africa, particularly when compared to the 1980s and early 1990s, however, the improvement was modest both by international standards and the standard of South Africa's own history (Du Plessis & Smit, 2006: 3). For instance, according to Du Plessis and Smit (2006: 4):

The average real GDP growth rate for the decade since 1994 (i.e. 1995 – 2004, inclusive) was 3,0% and in per capita terms 1,0%. This represents a substantial improvement on the 0,8% average growth rate (-1,3% in per capita terms) for the previous ten years (i.e. 1985 – 1994). However, the country's growth performance in that period was so mediocre ... (the worst since the second World War, as can be seen in that it seems ill suited as a benchmark. The 3 percent average growth rate for the first ten years after apartheid was also a disappointment relative to the expectations of many; and substantially below what was deemed necessary to support a lasting transition to democracy in South Africa.

Thus, it seems as if economic growth in South Africa post-1994 had moderate success. However, as I shall show below, other economists like Mohamed do not necessarily share their optimism raised by Du Plessis and Smit.

#### **4.3.4.1 The State of the South African Economy**

The South African economy was in a crisis before the recent global financial crisis even started, even though the GDP of the country grew at around 5% per annum in the period from 2004 to 2007 (Mohamed, 2010: 39). The global economic recession and financial crisis meant that the growth rate declined to 3.1% in 2008, followed by a recession in 2009 (Mohamed, 2010: 40). According to Statistics South Africa's quarterly labour force survey, employment decreased by 5,6% from the third quarter of 2008 to 2009, while manufacturing production decreased by nearly 20% from April 2008 to April 2009 and the service sectors declined and lost jobs, particularly in retail trade (Mohamed, 2010: 40). Also, as reported by the National Credit Regulator in September 2009, South African consumer debt had increased and 150 000

consumers were under debt review. Of these, 100 000 owed R20 billion, of which R12 billion was in home mortgages (Mohamed, 2010: 40). Therefore, the question that needs to be answered is how the economy managed to sink so low, so fast (Mohamed, 2010: 40; Jones, 2002: 50).

Mohamed argues that the massive depreciation of the South African Rand against the US dollar had a huge impact on the inflation rate because of the higher Rand cost of imports such as oil (Mohamed, 2010: 42). This, however, led the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) to respond by increasing the interest rates, which led to a bigger increase in unemployment (Mohamed, 2010: 42). Many South African economists and economic policymakers were blinded by the short period of growth at around 5% per annum from 2004 to 2007, not realising the crisis that in fact was unfolding (Mohamed, 2010: 43). Also, the decision by the government to adopt neoliberal economic policies (GEAR), and particularly macroeconomic and financial policies, had a hugely negative impact on South Africa by allowing short-term financial flows to create macroeconomic stability, which destroys industry and jobs (Jones, 2002: 54; Mohamed, 2010: 44). Unfortunately, the shift to neoliberal economic thinking within the state created a situation whereby macroeconomic and financial policies favoured big business (Jones, 2002: 56; Mohamed, 2010: 59)

Mohamed and Roberts (in Mohamed, 2010: 60) argue that the rise in employment in services has been in extremely low-wage activities, such as security and cleaning services, which has meant that the average remuneration has fallen as employment has increased. They go on to argue that the increasing role of services in the South

African economy is not a sign of economic maturation and is essentially not good for labour (Mohamed, 2010: 60). Also, the growth in the importance of services is due to the withdrawal of capital from the economy and the misallocation of capital towards financial speculation, housing price booms and exuberant consumption instead of productive investment (Mohamed, 2010: 60). After 1994, many big businesses had diversified their business to reduce exposure to the South African economy, and at the same time the economy's weak industrial structure focused on the minerals and energy complex because of the political, economic and historical processes that shaped the country's industrialisation (Mohamed, 2010: 61). The corporate restructuring further weakened the industrial structure of the economy (Mohamed, 2010: 61).

The government failed to adopt an industrial policy to address the industrial structural weaknesses because of the fiscal implications and because their neoliberal policies favoured less state intervention in the economy (Feinstein, 2005: 16; Mohamed, 2010: 61). The state's neoliberal macroeconomic and financial policy choices proved disastrous, and left the state unable to deal with the effects of financialisation and the corporate restructuring and deindustrialisation crisis in the economy (Feinstein, 2005: 42; Mohamed, 2010: 62). The inadequate economic policy choices by the government have forced the poor to bear the brunt of their choices. The latter has given rise to people losing their jobs or have had the quality of their jobs reduced through continued outsourcing, which made them dependent on government grants (Feinstein, 2005: 66; Mohamed, 2010: 62). The majority of South Africans will continue to face an increasingly bleak economic future, unless the government is

able to address the industrial decline in South Africa as well as the economic policies implemented to support industrial growth and transformation (Lewis, 2001: 6; Mohamed, 2010: 62).

#### **4.3.4.2 (Local) Economic Development in South Africa**

Blakely (in Nel, 2001: 1005) defines local economic development (LED) as the process in which local governments or community-based organisations engage to stimulate or maintain business activity and/or employment. The principal goal of LED is to stimulate local employment opportunities in sectors that improve the community, using existing human, natural and institutional resources. This is closely linked to the New Growth Path (NGP) framework, which places great emphasis on employment in the form of creating decent work for the South African citizens. Also, Zaaijer and Sara (in Nel, 2001: 1005) define local economic development as a process in which local governments and/or community-based groups manage their existing resources and enter into partnership arrangements with the private sector, or with each other, to create new jobs and stimulate economic activity in an economic area. Again, LED is closely linked with the neoliberal economic policy, namely GEAR, which also focuses on job creation through encouragement by the government to stimulate investment from the private sector. From a policy perspective, LED finds accord with the post-apartheid government's pursuit of a neoliberal economic strategy and a commitment to devolve the powers of government to the local level and to support community-based endeavours (Moodley, 2003: 14; Nel, 2001: 1009; Reddy, Singh & Moodley, 2003: 34).

Still in its infancy stage in South Africa, it appears that LED is generally a cost-effective and community-empowering process that has a defined role to play and can yield tangible benefits for participating communities (Nel, 2001: 1006). In addition, the process often relies far more on small-scale and community-based initiatives, utilising indigenous skills and seeking primarily to ensure survival, rather than participation in the global economy (Taylor & Mackenzie, in Nel, 2001: 1006). It can be argued that there are four variants of LED that are currently in existence in the country (Moodley, 2003: 16; Nel, 2001: 1012; Reddy, Singh & Moodley, 2003: 52), namely formal local government initiatives, community-based/small-town initiatives, Section 21 developmental corporations, and 'top-down' LED. It is, however, disappointing to note that, of the 791 local authorities in non-metropolitan areas in South Africa, only a handful have defined LED strategies in place and are actually implementing them (Moodley, 2003: 24; Nel, 2001: 1020; Reddy, Singh & Moodley, 2003: 76).

The government needs to provide greater levels of support and funding if it wishes to see more local authorities actively engaged in LED. Also, LED requires the joint action of a range of stakeholders if it is to succeed, and NGOs and community-based organisations have key roles to play in filling the development gap that exists and assisting in this endeavour (Nel, 2001: 1020). LED is clearly being viewed and adopted as a new growth and development catalyst, and thus reflects and manifests the contemporary forces of globalism and localism (Nel, 2001: 1020). As local areas in South Africa look inward at their own resources and skills to promote LED, they

often seek a unique place for themselves in an increasingly globalised economy and society (Nel, 2001: 1020).

A differentiation is often made between economic development and local economic development (LED). In South Africa, some reporting municipalities or local authorities (six out of 19) see LED as 'a local focus' or 'micro- and meso-level intervention' inspired by community-based activities, and economic development as a 'macro approach' or a focus on 'broader issues such as trade, investment and partnerships', with an emphasis on building a globally competitive society to the benefit of all communities (Nel & Goldman, 2006: ix and 36; Moodley, 2003: 82). For instance, some view LED as involving job creation through local partnerships and economic development as growing and retaining GDP and increasing revenue (Nel & Goldman, 2006: 36; Moodley, 2003: 94). The remaining 13 reporting municipalities see no distinction between the two. I support this view of Nel & Goldman, (2006: 36) that the two concepts (LED and economic development) focus exclusively on job creation and desirable growth that can lead to job creation. So, LED 'include(s) all activities which local governments and other stakeholders at local level engage in to enhance growth, incomes and livelihoods, specifically including that of poor people' (Nel & Goldman, 2006: 2).

By implication, LED focuses on job creation, skills development, investment attraction, inner-city development, infrastructural development with a poverty-focused bias such as social development, food provision, housing and services (Nel & Goldman, 2006: x). In other words, LED links increasing growth with reducing poverty

and inequality. In pursuit of LED, local governments aim to establish a job-creating economic growth path; to embark on sustainable rural development and urban renewal; and to bring the poor and disadvantaged to the centre of development (Nel & Goldman, 2006: 13). Following from the aforementioned understanding of LED, the following interventions are required: community-based development; human capital investment; service delivery and infrastructure provision to those most in need; retention and expansion of local economic activity such as promoting tourism-led development; improving safety and security in communities; and fostering local self-reliance by ordinary residents (Nel & Goldman, 2006: 13; Moodley, 2003: 76).

Thus, from the aforementioned understanding of economic development, specifically LED, it is clear that the latter cannot occur without communal involvement. This means that people in local communities have to become engaged in activities that will enhance LED. However, and more importantly, the community-based initiatives seem to have a better opportunity to flourish if people engage in democratic action. The reason for this is that the democratic actions of deliberation, respect for diversity and inclusion can most appropriately direct community-based activities towards minimising inequality and the non-marginalisation or inclusion of people. In other words, I cannot foresee LED happening without people engaging in forms of democratic action. That is, democratic action is a precondition for LED.

This brings me to an investigation of the relationship between local economic development (LED), democracy and learning outcomes.



#### **4.4 Economics Learning Outcomes, Democracy and Economic Development: A Synopsis**

Thus far I have shown how local economic development (that is, LED) is tied to democratic action. I shall now examine how the Economics learning outcomes create conditions for the enactment of democratic action that lays the grounds for contributing towards economic development, that is, LED will not happen if one does not have democratic action.

Firstly, central to the teaching of macroeconomics (learning outcome 1) is the notion of community participation in local economic planning and activities. A discussion of community participation is linked to explanations of LED issues such as unemployment and approaches to solve it, as well as activities such as the economic importance of tourism. Teaching learners about community participation involves cultivating in them a sense of democratic action. What seems to be emphasised is participation by people with the view to engender LED for the reason that the latter is also linked to resolving unemployment through the creation of jobs. Hence the democratic action is specifically mentioned in relation to job creation through local tourist initiatives. What follows is that democratic action seems to be important to the teaching of macroeconomics (learning outcome 1).

Secondly, the teaching of macroeconomics also creates space for an analysis of the economic structure of South Africa in terms of its sectoral composition, highlighting exclusion and discrimination. Focusing on both exclusion and marginalisation

involves teaching learners about democratic action for the reason that the latter is linked to cultivating the inclusion of all participants. Even the teaching of labour relations, labour rights and dispute resolution in learning outcomes 1 and 4 can be said to be tantamount to teaching learners skills for democratic action. This is so because democratic action also involves enacting relationships, recognising rights and resolving disputes. For the reason that the latter democratic actions are specifically intertwined with labour issues that can secure people jobs or improve opportunities to find employment, it can be claimed that the teaching of some learning outcomes is joined to the enhancement of democratic action and therefore LED, or an attempt to address joblessness and to eradicate or minimise unemployment through local activities.

Thirdly, and quite significantly, human rights issues are included in the teaching of all four learning outcomes. This suggests that the learning outcomes are also meant to teach people about respecting human dignity, cultivating it and finding ways to combat inequality because the latter violates human rights. In this way, the teaching of human rights is a way of teaching learners to be democratic for the reason that democracy involves securing human rights. And only if human rights are taught does the possibility that people might not be exploited become important to the teaching of learning outcomes. This is so for the reason that the exploitation and exclusion that emanate from the former can most seriously be undermined through the recognition of human rights. Consequently, if human rights are taught and learners become acquainted with what it means not to exploit and exclude others, conditions for the

flourishing of LED would be taught through an initiation of learners into discussions about democratic action.

This brings me to a discussion of social justice in relation to the FET curriculum and GDFs for the reason that the former is considered as one of the primary goals of both the GDFs and learning outcomes.

#### **4.5 The Bill of Rights and Social Justice**

The Bill of Rights is a cornerstone of democracy in South Africa that enshrines the rights of all people in South Africa and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom (Republic of South Africa, 1996: 3). In order to ensure that there is equality in the workplace and in society in general, the Bill of Rights promotes equality through legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons, or categories of persons disadvantaged by unfair discrimination (Republic of South Africa, 1996: 3). Here, equality entails that everyone is protected by the law and enjoys rights and freedoms as democratic citizens of South Africa, and no single person may be discriminated against on the grounds of race, religion, ethnicity and so forth, as stated in the SA Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996: 3). The South African Constitution states that the National Assembly, the National Council of Provinces, provincial legislatures and members of a municipal council, as integral legislative committees of the Constitution, are put in place to ensure that democratic actions are implemented by each of the representative committees (Republic of South Africa, 1996:19-51).

The Bill of Rights encourages social justice by stating that every South African citizen has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief and opinion (Republic of South Africa, 1996:4). Here, freedom of expression implies that every adult citizen has the right to vote, to fair labour practice, to basic education, and the right to use his/her language and cultural life of choice (Republic of South Africa, 1996: 4-6). In terms of the rights enacted by and mentioned in the Bill of Rights, the court is used to give effect to the right of the Bill or, if necessary, a common law is developed to the extent that legislation does not give effect to that right (Republic of South Africa, 1996: 3).

In addition, the Bill of Rights encourages economic development in South Africa by stating that every person has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or wellbeing, to promote conservation and sustainable development and to use natural resources efficiently (Republic of South Africa, 1996: 6). The Bill of Rights ensures that the rights are enacted upon through reasonable legislative and other measures. Furthermore, the Bill states that every single person has the right to healthcare services, sufficient water and food, and social security (Republic of South Africa, 1996: 8).

One of objectives of local government in terms of the Constitution is to promote social and economic development, as well to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities (Republic of South Africa, 1996: 47). Municipalities are put in place in order to ensure that the objectives of local government are

implemented, and these municipalities must be structured to manage their administration and budgeting and establish planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community and to provide in the social and economic development needs of the community (Republic of South Africa, 1996: 47).

In addition, national, provincial and municipal budgets and budgetary processes must promote transparency, accountability and the effective management of the economy, debt and the public sector (Republic of South Africa, 1996:70). The primary object of the South African Reserve Bank, which is identified in the Constitution as the central bank of the Republic, is to protect the value of the South African currency in the interest of sustainable economic growth in the country (Republic of South Africa, 1996: 70). Through tax revenue that the government acquires from its working citizens, the National Revenue Fund is used to provide an equitable share of the revenue to each of the nine provinces, and to local governments or municipalities (Republic of South Africa, 1996:69). The Constitution is thus an integral document for economic development in South Africa, with growth and development in each of the nine provinces being seen as vital for the economy to develop.

As stated in the South African Constitution, the Human Rights Commission must promote respect for human rights and a culture of human rights, as well as promote the protection, development and attainment of human rights and monitor and assess the observance of human rights in the Republic (Republic of South Africa, 1996: 58). The Constitution also makes mention of the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities and the

Commission for Gender Equality. Two of the primary objectives of the aforementioned Commission are to promote respect for the rights of cultural, religious and linguistic communities and to promote and develop peace, friendship, humanity, tolerance and national unity among cultural, religious and linguistic communities on the basis of equality, non-discrimination and free association (Republic of South Africa, 1996: 58-59).

The Commission for Gender Equality should promote respect for gender equality and promote the protection, development and attainment of gender equality (Republic of South Africa, 1996: 59). These two commissions are highlighted by the South African Constitution to ensure that issues of equality and social justice are enacted, and that a sense of democracy is established to ensure that every single person has the freedom to act without being discriminated against unfairly.

Few of us would deny that the majority of South Africa's population underwent some of the grossest violations of human rights during apartheid rule (1948-1994). Racial discrimination against and the political, social and economic exclusion of the majority of South Africa's people prior to 1994 tarnished the country's history. During the public hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), most of the perpetrators of apartheid crimes came face-to-face with their 'victims' and apologised for some of the heinous crimes committed in the name of apartheid. At that time, most South Africans did not believe that political exclusion would ever resurface.

Human rights education, focusing on primary and secondary school systems, emerged as one of the main priorities of UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) main priorities for a period of three years from 2005 to 2007). According to the revised draft plan of action of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, 'the long prevention of human rights abuses and violent conflict, the promotion of equality and sustainable development and the enhancement of people's participation in decision-making processes within a democratic system' should be a common responsibility of the international community (World Programme for Human Rights Education, 2005: 3). Human rights education is education, training and information aimed at cultivating a universal culture of human rights, which involve the following: the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; the full development of human personality and the sense of its dignity; the promotion of understanding, tolerance, gender equality and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups; the enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free and democratic society governed by the rule of law; the building and maintenance of peace; and the promotion of people-centred sustainable development and social justice (World Programme for Human Rights Education, 2005: 3). Of course, the goals of human rights education seem laudable and, at face value, little seems to be wrong with making an argument for its implementation at schools.

Against this background I shall now give an overview of the government's response to social justice, as well as its human rights education agenda. Since the

establishment of the country's new democratic system of government in April 1994, every education policy initiative has been linked to the democratic principles stated in the Constitution and Bill of Rights of 1996. The national Department of Education (DoE) began the Tirisano project (*Tirisano* meaning 'working together') in 1999, with its strategic goals being to ensure that the country's new outcomes-based education system (OBE) could be implemented successfully in line with the spirit of democracy, respect for human rights, justice, equality, freedom, nation building and reconciliation – all key features listed in the Preamble to the Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996).

After the second democratic elections in 1999, the Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, accelerated the work done by his predecessor, Professor Sibusiso Bengu. The year 1999 also welcomed in the new President, Thabo Mbeki, whose 'watchword' was 'accelerated delivery' (Department of Education, 1999: 7). In his State of the Nation address to Parliament on 25 June 1999, President Mbeki identified education and training as a critical priority for meeting the broader challenge of creating a democratic and prosperous society (Department of Education, 1999: 11). On 27 July 1999, after discussions with the major stakeholders in the educational arena, the Minister of Education launched what he termed a national mobilisation for education and training under the slogan *Tirisano* ('working together'), to which end he called upon all South Africans to join hands with the Ministry in the spirit of *Tirisano* to tackle the most urgent problems in education. More specifically, the *Tirisano* project announced as its goals: establishing co-operative governance in educational institutions; making schools 'centres of community and cultural life'; attending to and



preventing the physical degradation of schools; developing the professionalism of teachers; cultivating active learning through OBE; creating an education and training system that could meet the socio-economic demands of the country; reconfiguring higher education in line with the imperatives of a global market economy; and dealing purposefully with HIV and AIDS (Department of Education, 1999).

The goals of the *Tirisano* project stressed the Ministry of Education's commitment to produce democratic citizens who, on the one hand, can contribute towards achieving the political stability and peace necessary to ensure the growth of a competitive labour market economy and, on the other hand, can combat the crime, corruption and moral decadence endemic to South African society. Two strategic moments spearheaded by the Department of Education sum up the country's commitment to implementing democratic citizenship education: (1) the Report of the Working Group on Values in Education (Department of Education, 2000), which culminated in the Saamtrek Conference on Values, Education and Democracy (Department of Education, 2001a); this, in turn, generated (2) the Manifesto on Values in Education (Department of Education, 2001b). Following the 1994 elections, the transformation of the education system became the top priority of the new government. According to Minister Asmal, the democratic values enshrined in the Constitution had to be developed and internalised by South Africans, and schools were the most convenient point of embarking upon this project.

As stated earlier, President Thabo Mbeki identified education and training as a critical priority for meeting the broader challenge of creating a democratic and prosperous

society. His position was that the transformation of the education system required a fundamental reassessment and rethinking in order to prepare people for 'citizenship' and 'nationhood'. Therefore Minister Asmal, in his *Tirisano* Implementation Plan, focused on developing people for citizenship. Minister Bengu announced on his appointment in 1994 that all schools and education institutions were open and without racial barriers of any kind, as promulgated in the 1993 Interim Constitution. The South African Schools Act of 1996 created the nation's first national and non-racial school system (Department of Education, 1999: 63). However, on the one hand, a South African Human Rights Commission study on racial integration in schools found that racism was still extremely prevalent in some schools. On the other hand, another question being debated was whether the Department of Education should focus on 'race' alone as a form of discrimination (Department of Education, 1999: 66).

During an informal discussion between Professor Kader Asmal and some educators on religious education for the *Tirisano* Plan, the idea of a 'Values, Education and Democracy' project, following the international trend of 'education for democratic values and social participation', was born. On the basis of this broader concern for social solidarity and cohesion, the practice of peace, and civic participation in democratic institutions, Minister Kader Asmal requested that a working group on 'Values, Education and Democracy' be established in February 2000 (Department of Education, 1999: 66-67). Under the auspices of the Working Group, a school-based research project was conducted in October 2000 by a consortium of research organisations led by the Witwatersrand University Education Policy Unit to explore

the ways that teachers, students and parents think and talk about 'Values, Education and Democracy'. Ninety-seven schools across five provinces were chosen by provincial officials to represent the range of schools in their province. Questionnaires were administered to all the teachers and principals. Three-hour participatory workshops were conducted separately with teachers, students and parents in thirteen schools (Department of Education, 2000: 4).

The purpose of the school-based research project was to obtain comment and testimony from educators and learners in schools, and to use this to help reshape further initiatives on 'Values, Education and Democracy' (VED). In these schools, educators, learners and parents described the dominant values that were operative in different ways. The overwhelming majority of educators emphasised that the values of 'discipline' and 'obedience' were dominant in the sense that learners (and to some extent parents) were expected to obey both explicit and implicit rules of behaviour. Their general perception was that the values of 'disrespect' and 'lack of discipline' guided learners at school and that parents 'lacked commitment' and did not appreciate the 'value of education' (Department of Education, 2002: 49). The majority of learners described the school environment as reflecting the values of disrespect, discrimination and negative discipline (corporal punishment, humiliation and insulting language). Gender discrimination (sometimes in the form of sexual abuse) was a common theme across schools. While significantly fewer learners identified positive values in practice, a group of learners in primary schools spoke of the values of love, kindness, sharing, humanity and understanding (Department of Education, 2002: 49). Parents expressed the view that schools showed insufficient

respect to parents. They often felt judged by educators for failing to meet expectations that had not been negotiated with them beforehand. They were particularly concerned about inequalities between schools (Department of Education, 2002: 50).

After a process of research and debate, this working group presented a report on its findings and recommendations, entitled *Values, Education and Democracy: Report of the Working Group on Values in Education*, in April 2000. According to the Report of the Working Group (RWG), the democratic Constitution and Bill of Rights ratified in 1996 provide the frame of reference for a democratic educational philosophy. The RWG outlines the importance of achieving the following in education:

- 1) developing the intellectual abilities and critical faculties of students;
- 2) establishing a climate of inclusiveness in institutions whereby students do not feel alienated and excluded;
- 3) equipping students with problem-solving abilities (Department of Education, 2000).

The Working Group proposed the promotion of six values in institutions that they contended would contribute towards producing an inclusive, critical student population capable of problem solving. These values were equity, tolerance, multilingualism, openness, accountability and social honour (Department of Education, 2000). Moreover, the resolutions of the VED conference related to implementing democratic citizenship education that had three dimensions:

- 1) promoting anti-racism through the teaching of a new history curriculum that required that teachers be upgraded appropriately;
- 2) integrating the aesthetic performing arts subjects and African languages into the curricula; and
- 3) incorporating civics education in the curricula, with an emphasis on people engaging critically in intersubjective deliberation (Department of Education, 2001a).

The resolutions of the conference, which culminated in the generation of the Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (Department of Education, 2001b), put a great deal of emphasis on citizens engaging actively with others in shaping the future of South African society through democratic engagement. The Manifesto announced the achievement of the following ten communitarian ‘values’ in educational institutions: democracy, social justice and equity, equality, non-racism and non-sexism, *ubuntu* (human dignity), an open society, accountability, the rule of law, respect and reconciliation (Department of Education, 2001b). It is with the aforementioned background in mind that I now look in more detail at social justice in relation to the GDFs and learning outcomes of the NCS and CAPS.

#### **4.6 Social Justice, Objectives of GDFs and Competence in Economics Learning Outcomes**

As has been mentioned in Chapter 3, the GDFs and more specifically the NGP identifies several job drivers or objectives to stimulate economic development and

social transformation in South Africa. Firstly, to create 260 000 jobs a year in infrastructure (energy, transport, water, communications) and housing through to 2015 aimed at improving competitiveness across the economy, supporting efficient, diversified and inclusive growth, and generating capacity development and regulatory change (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 34) require competence in the Economics learning outcomes. In relation to the Grade 10 Economics learning outcomes, acquiring competences to make informed judgements based upon information or other evidence that was consulted; consider available information, discuss an issue and reach a suitable conclusion; engage various research methods (e.g. questionnaires, interviews and observations) in order to find answers to basic economic problems; use information and evidence (e.g. on prices); write these quantitatively (e.g. in index numbers) and explain the conclusions that were derived (e.g. the trend and magnitude of inflation); debate an issue or a phenomenon and draw convincing conclusions (e.g. debate the economic necessity of labour rights and conventions); apply knowledge of classification of symbols, definitions, facts and information (e.g. use the national account equations to quantify the effect of injections into and leakages from the economy); use knowledge and understanding (e.g. of business cycles) to devise solutions to other economic problems (e.g. inflation); communicate in writing and orally using enriched (FET-level) economic terminology and standard language conventions; think critically on issues relating to economic theory and practice and provide solutions for economic problems (e.g. the insensitive exploitation of natural resources in South Africa) (NCS, 2003: 42) are actions required to initiate, monitor, sustain and evaluate an infrastructure for employment and development. When competence in learning outcomes (Grade 10)

is acquired the possibility of enacting social justice through achieving the aforementioned job driver will become a real possibility for the reason that achieving social justice is linked to establishing an infrastructure for employment and development.

Secondly, to improve job creation in the economic sectors such as agriculture, mining, manufacturing, and tourism in order to review land reform, maximise the creation of livelihoods through smallholder schemes based on stepped up integration with economic and social programmes; identify options for stabilising food prices, especially maize; support farm worker organisation; strengthen AgriBEE support for rural coops; fast track land claims on commercial farms; develop a ten-year strategic plan for electricity, logistics and skills for mining; benchmark pricing, extend quality assurance and address logistics; industrial policy to identify ways to diversify business services (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 35) require competence in Economics learning outcomes. In relation to the Grade 11 Economics learning outcomes, acquiring competences to comment on the relative importance of various informed arguments; compare a number of possible views about an issue or problem (e.g. developing strategies) and weigh up their relative importance; investigate problems by finding suitable evidence and analyse, interpret and explain the evidence; use quantitative data, present it appropriate (e.g. using line graphs, pie charts, bar charts) and draw conclusions that are explained; debate/discuss an issue (e.g. South Africa's role in Africa) and draw valid and convincing conclusions; respond to questions by interpreting content in a variety of contexts (e.g. explain, discuss or analyse the balance of payment account); use evidence gained from

problems and their solutions to create new knowledge and understanding; communicate, using enriched contemporary economic terminology and standard language conventions, particularly in oral and written presentations (NCS, 2003: 43) are actions required to improve job creation in economics sectors. When competence in learning outcomes (Grade 11) is acquired the possibility of enacting social justice through achieving the aforementioned job driver will hopefully materialise because achieving social justice is linked to job creation in the economic sectors.

Thirdly, seizing the potential of new economies (such as the green economy and knowledge economy) in order to identify options for renewable energy generation, with appropriate regulatory changes to follow; develop codes for commercial buildings to reduce energy use and waste; pursue public works to drive environmental programmes, including recycling and community cleaning (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 35) require competence in Economics learning outcomes. In relation to the Grade 12 Economics learning outcomes, acquiring competences such as to identify the characteristics that make two or more ideas, concepts or issues different and summarise the comparison; synthesise across topics and learning outcomes (e.g. give an integrated account of South Africa's major economic problems this year); go systematically through a research process and report coherently and substantiate findings responsibly (e.g. by exposing them to rigorous debate); use mathematical, statistical and other numerical methods to describe ordinary economic manifestations; use arguments, other than the usual, to discuss a problem, issue or phenomenon; present a demonstration of knowledge in assessment instruments in more than one context (e.g. cognitively, geographically,



socially); consult various knowledge sources, including peers, parents and experts, in order to solve new problems in unfamiliar contexts; enhance oral and written communications with poster presentations, using, *inter alia*, diagrams, tables, drawings, illustrations, maps and photos are pedagogical actions required to seize the potential of new economies. When competence in learning outcomes (Grade 12) is acquired the possibility of enacting social justice through achieving the aforementioned job driver will hopefully materialise because achieving social justice is linked to seizing new economies. Acquiring competence in the Grade 12 learning outcomes is also linked to learning about investing in social capital and spatial development – that is, developing spatial perspective by end of 2010 as the basis for establishing integrated long-term provincial infrastructure plans; upgrading existing smallholders through provision of infrastructure, marketing support, extension, financial services; and developing detailed policy on African regional development require competence in Grade 10-12 learning outcomes.

#### **4.7 Summary**

In this chapter I have argued for the cultivation of democratic action through the teaching of critical learning outcomes. If democratic action is taught by initiating learners into outcomes, then the possibility exists that they would be taught about conditions that would secure their human freedom and hence their commitment to enhancing LED. In the next chapter I turn my attention to an examination of social justice as a central theme in the GDFs and the teaching of learning outcomes.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DEMOCRACY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE CULTIVATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

In the previous chapter I showed how some of the FET Economics learning outcomes can engender forms of democratic action, namely participation, responsibility, respect for diversity, inclusion and deliberation. I shall now show how these forms of democratic action, together with economic development, can achieve social justice for the reason that social justice seems to be an important outcome of the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs). In this way, I will indicate how learning outcomes can contribute towards bringing about social justice, thus achieving an important goal of the GDFs.

In the previous chapter I examine social justice in relation to the learning outcomes of the FET Economics curriculum. I discuss why social justice seems to be an important goal of the GDFs. Against the background of political instability, military coups, one-party governments and dictatorships, coupled with huge foreign debts and a lack of social development on the African continent, the New Path for Africa's Development (NEPAD) emerged to reverse these trends. The main aim of NEPAD is to make Africa self-reliant and culturally relevant, with a high premium being placed on state-mediated development strategies. In a way, NEPAD has been tasked to ensure that

social justice is brought back to countries on the African continent (NEPAD, 2001). In post-apartheid South Africa, the RDP is considered as the first major move of the government to ensure that social democratic justice becomes a priority for any development strategy (Bond, 2005). Also, despite its failure to match the global market neo-liberalism imperatives of privatisation, deregulation, fiscal discipline and export growth, the implementers of GEAR were tasked by the government to create jobs, reduce poverty and minimise inequality, thus laying the groundwork for social justice in South African communities (Cock & Fig, 2001). Similarly, the NGP focuses on increasing production and creating employment, which can hopefully ensure more sustainable economic growth and hence social justice in communities (Republic of South Africa, 2010). It would appear that the GDFs foreground the achievement of social justice in South African society. I shall now look at the notion of social justice in more detail with specific reference to a capabilities approach. Thus, in this chapter I argue that the acquisition of FET learning outcomes involves enacting one's capabilities that will help to foster understanding, knowledge construction and critical analysis – all enactments that can lead to the achievement of conditions for social justice as stipulated in the GDFs.

## **5.2 A Capabilities Approach to Social Justice**

For the purposes of this thesis I draw mainly on the ideas of justice advocated by Martha Nussbaum (2003: 33) for the reason that she links a notion of justice to economic growth as an indicator of a nation's quality of life, that is, the wellbeing of its society and citizens. Also, Nussbaum's ideas of justice emanate from John

Rawls's (1971) monumental work, *A Theory of Justice*. Rawls (1971: 78) explains justice in terms of two principles that ought to guide the distribution of primary goods, including wealth and income. The principles advocated by Rawls are the following: First Principle (Liberty principle) – Each person is to have an *equal right* to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar system of liberty for all. In other words, all people have access to their basic liberties, which include freedom of speech, political freedom and access to property, and freedom from arbitrary arrest; and Second Principle (Difference principle) – Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) to the greatest *benefit of the least advantaged*, consistent with the just savings principle, and (b) attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of *fair equality of opportunity* (Rawls, 1971: 266).

Stated differently, inequalities in social and economic goods should be arranged so that they provide the greatest benefit to those who are disadvantaged. In the light of this thesis, economic development in a Rawlsian sense means that all people should have jobs in order to ensure that they can own or rent property that would perhaps enable them to acquire adequate housing. Any denial of a person's right to employment would mean that such a person is deprived of a basic liberty. And, if jobs become available and people have the appropriate skills to do their tasks, then the job opportunities should, following the difference principle, advantage those who might enjoy the least privileges in society. The point is that economic development in a Rawlsian sense suggests that people's contribution to the economy and its growth can be achieved most appropriately if they (the people) are not denied their basic

liberty of access to jobs and, more importantly, they should be given opportunities to overcome their disadvantages by being given equal opportunities on the basis of giving priority to those in society who are the least advantaged.

Considering economic development in the way Rawls would want us to think about the concept is not without its contradictions. One such contradiction is that it seems as if Rawls assumes that all people can perform equally well. This is a major gap in Rawls's approach to social justice because all people are not the same and, if they were to be afforded equal opportunities, they might not necessarily perform equally well in doing the job. In a way, the Rawlsian assumption that economic development can best be enhanced if people are afforded equal opportunities on the basis of giving more preference to the disadvantaged might in some instances undermine the very idea of development. For instance, one might be appointed in a job that requires higher-order skills. When the job is offered to someone who might not have the capacity to do the work well, such a person would not ably contribute to development. It is for this reason that I want to pay attention to the capability or human development approach made famous by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum – both of them in fact take the Rawlsian position on social justice further.

Amartya Sen's capability approach is a broad normative framework for the evaluation of individual wellbeing and social arrangements, and the design of policies and proposals about social change in society (Robeyns, 2003: 5). The approach is used in a wide range of fields in development thinking, social policy, political philosophy and welfare economics, and is also used to evaluate a wide variety of aspects of

people's wellbeing, such as individual wellbeing, poverty and inequality (Robeyns, 2003: 5). Some aspects of the capability approach can be traced back to Aristotle, Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill and Karl Marx, among others (Robeyns, 2003: 5). The capability approach in its present form has thus been pioneered by economist and philosopher Amartya Sen and, more recently, developed significantly by philosopher Martha Nussbaum (Robeyns, 2003: 5). The capability approach has been advanced in different directions by Martha Nussbaum, who has used the capability approach as the foundation for a partial theory of justice (Robeyns, 2003:5).

Sen has insisted on the importance of capabilities against the dominant emphasis on economic growth as an indicator of a nation's quality of life (Nussbaum, 2003: 33). Nussbaum argues that growth is a bad indicator of life quality because it fails to tell us how deprived people are doing and where women in terms of Sen's arguments of gender are people – those who are often unable to enjoy the fruits of a nation's general prosperity (Nussbaum, 2003: 33). Sen argues that development as freedom develops one pertinent line of thought, arguing that capabilities provide the best basis for thinking about the goals of development (Sen, in Nussbaum 2003: 34), as capabilities provide us with an attractive way of understanding the normative content of the idea of development (Nussbaum, 2003: 34). Moreover, Nussbaum states that capabilities have a very close relationship with human rights, as they cover the terrain covered by both the so-called 'first-generation rights' (political and civil liberties) and the so-called 'second-generation rights' (economic and social rights), also providing both with a basis for cross-cultural comparison and philosophical underpinning for basic constitutional principles (Nussbaum, 2003: 36).

Nussbaum also states that capabilities are very closely linked to rights, but the language of capabilities gives important precision and supplementation to the language of rights (Nussbaum, 2003: 37). In terms of fundamental rights, Nussbaum claims that the best way of thinking about what it is to secure them for people is to think in terms of capabilities, since rights to political participation, religious freedom and free speech, among others, are secured for people only when the relevant capabilities to function are present. She goes on to state that to secure a right for citizens in these areas is to put them in a position of capability to function in that area, to the extent that rights are used in defining social justice and where capabilities have in fact been achieved (Nussbaum, 2003: 37). A further advantage of the capabilities approach is that, by focusing on what people are actually able to do and be from the start, it is possible to foreground and address gender inequalities in terms of women suffering in the family, inequalities in resources and opportunities, educational deprivations, the failure of work to be recognised as work, and insults to bodily integrity (Nussbaum, 2003: 37).

In my view, the South African government should take the capability approach seriously, as this for instance would acknowledge that unemployment and bad housing put serious stress on marriages and families and ultimately on people's wellbeing and their functioning and capability. Also, resources might be important to ensure the greater wellbeing of individual needs and even the only way to enlarge people's capability sets, although for Sen resources are and remain the means for redistribution and not the end of our political concerns (Robeyns, 2003: 53). In terms

of my thesis, the capability approach can be used for the measurement of wellbeing or advantage as such, without any intention to derive policy recommendations, since it can also be used to evaluate and rank the wellbeing effects of different social policies that would yield the same level of wellbeing in a utilitarian framework (Robeyns, 2003: 53). Following Robeyns, the capability approach is not just useful for the design of policies, but also can help to evaluate how people's wellbeing has been affected by irreversible events that the government can perhaps not do much to solve (Robeyns, 2003: 53). If a specific application of the capability approach would make policy recommendations, then it could also be directed to or taken up by families, private organisations, NGOs, interest groups, or self-organised community groups instead of being restricted to government. It then would be hard to see how a locally organised or self-organised body could be accused of paternalism or any unjustified redistributions (Robeyns, 2003: 53).

My next attempt will be to show what the capability approach entails and how it can attend to gaps left by Rawls's social justice principles. Unlike Rawls, who claims that rights are first generation (people should be afforded equal access to political and social rights) and second generation (the least advantaged should be favoured so as to enhance economic and social rights), the capabilities approach considers rights as entitlements to capabilities that have material and social preconditions (such as the provision of health care and education), which requires government action (Nussbaum, 2000: 77). This means that the question that should be asked is not what do people desire (for instance, what employment do they want), but rather what are they in a position to do, that is, what are their capabilities. Nussbaum (2000: 78-



80) argues that each person is a worthy human being on the basis of the fact that the person is able 'to imagine, think, and reason – and to do these things in a truly human way'; 'to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection'; 'to live with and toward others, to recognise and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction – to be able to imagine the situation of another and to have compassion for that situation (and) to have the capability for both 'justice and friendship'; 'to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others (which) entails, at a minimum, protections against discrimination on the basis of sex, race, sexual orientation, religion, caste, ethnicity, or national origin'; 'to work as a human being, exercising practical reason and entering into meaningful relationships of mutual recognition with other(s)'. For Nussbaum, then, people have capabilities, that is, they are capable of showing 'concern for other human beings' and to work as a human being, exercising practical reason and entering into meaningful relationships of mutual recognition with other(s). My view is that the latter is a good starting point to begin contributing towards economic development and democracy. Recognising that people have these capabilities – to show concern for other human beings, and to work using practical reason – is a good starting point from which one can seriously start to think more deeply about democracy and economic development in relation to social justice. The central capabilities, following Nussbaum (2006: 78-79, *italics added*), are given in more detail below:

1. Life. Being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length; not dying prematurely, or before one's life is so reduced as to be not worth living.

2. Bodily Health. Being able to have good health, including reproductive health; to be adequately nourished; to have adequate shelter.

3. Bodily Integrity. Being able to move freely from place to place; to be secure against violent assault, including sexual assault and domestic violence; having opportunities for sexual satisfaction and for choice in matters of reproduction.

4. Senses, Imagination, and Thought. Being able to use the senses, to imagine, think and reason and to do these things in a "truly human" way, a way informed and cultivated by an adequate education, including, but by no means limited to, literacy and basic mathematical and scientific training. Being able to use imagination and thought in connection with experiencing and producing works and events of one's own choice, religious, literary, musical, and so forth. Being able to use one's mind in ways protected by guarantees of *freedom of expression* with respect to both political and artistic speech, and freedom of religious exercise. Being able to have pleasurable experiences and to avoid non-beneficial pain.

5. Emotions. Being able to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves; to love those who love and care for us, to grieve at their absence; in general, to love, to grieve, to experience longing, gratitude, and justified anger. Not having one's emotional development blighted by fear and anxiety. (Supporting this capability means supporting forms of human association that can be shown to be crucial in their development.)

6. Practical Reason. Being able to form a conception of the good and to *engage in critical reflection* about the planning of one's life. (This entails protection of the liberty of conscience and religious observance.)

7. Affiliation. a). *Being able to live with and toward others, to recognise and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction; to be able to imagine the situation of another.* (Protecting this

capability means protecting institutions that constitute and nourish such forms of affiliation, and also protecting the freedom of assembly and political speech.)

b). *Having the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation*; being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others. This entails provisions of *non-discrimination* on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, caste, religion, national origin.

8. Other Species. Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature.

9. Play. Being able to laugh, to play, to enjoy recreational activities.

10. Control over one's Environment.

a). Political. *Being able to participate effectively* in political choices that govern one's life; having the right to political participation, protections of *free speech* and association.

b). Material. Being able to hold property (both land and movable goods), and having property rights on an equal basis with others; *having the right to seek employment on an equal basis with others*; having the freedom from unwarranted search and seizure. In work, being able to work as a human being, exercising practical reason and entering into meaningful relationships of mutual recognition with other workers.

In essence, the capabilities approach is premised on the idea that all world citizens (people) are entitled to certain capabilities, such as the ability to live to the end of human life, being able to have good health, move freely, use their senses, participate in political activities, and engage in economic transactions (Nussbaum, 2006: 81). Once these capabilities are enacted and/or extended, people will have opportunities

to improve their quality of life, such as having more freedom and choice, education, health, as well as income and employment, that is, they will experience social justice or, more specifically, exercise equality, engage in solidarity and recognise one another's rights (Nussbaum, 2006: 82). For Nussbaum (2006: 84-86), justice is to live one's life in a 'truly human way', that is, to live according to capabilities that are made possible for all human beings in order to ensure their human flourishing in all societies as minimum criteria for social justice.

I shall now investigate how democratic action and economic development can contribute towards achieving social justice, with reference to the Economics learning outcomes in the FET curriculum.

### **5.3 Learning Outcomes and their Implications for Democratic Action, Economic Development and Social Justice**

Bearing in mind that engaging in political and economic activity constitutes ways of exercising one's capabilities, it would in order to argue that embarking on democratic actions and implementing ways to bring about economic development would be tantamount to enacting one's capabilities because the latter (democratic actions and economic development) are linked to politics and economics. If this happens, the possibility arises for people to improve their quality of life – whether through education, opportunities for jobs, health or procurement of freedom and rights. In this way, social justice can be realised.

Firstly, considering that one of the capabilities (identified by Nussbaum) is to be in affiliation with others (that is, to live in association with others), and another is to be politically engaged with others, it would not be inappropriate to claim that cultivating democratic action does in fact suggest that one would be enacting one's capabilities – that is, to act democratically is to do so in conjunction with others. And, if one considers that participating with others, acting responsibly towards them, respecting their diversity, and including them in deliberative discourse constitute such democratic actions, it follows that participation, respect for diversity and deliberative engagement are 'capabilities' that individuals and groups can enact. When such democratic actions result in the recognition of the rights of all participants to express their opinions, claiming their right to be different in an atmosphere of equality (all facets of social justice), it can be deduced that embarking on democratic action implies enacting one's capability to engender social justice.

Secondly, as has been mentioned in the previous chapter, economic development involves sustained efforts on the part of people (that is, their human freedoms) to improve and enhance their socio-political, cultural and economic conditions of living. Following this view of economic development, it makes sense to suggest that poverty eradication, good governance, gender equity, environmental sustainability, capacity building and technological advancement should be seen as human capabilities aimed at achieving social justice, that is, establishing equality, solidarity and the recognition of rights.

This brings me to an examination of how learning outcomes can contribute towards creating conditions for the achievement of social justice, that is, exercising equality, acting in solidarity and recognising rights. As was shown in Chapter 3, the FET curriculum for Economics for Grades 10 to 12 has four learning outcomes related to demonstrating knowledge and critical understanding. Learners therefore are taught how to do the following: apply the principles, processes and practices of the economy; analyse the dynamics of the markets; be aware of the policies and practices underpinning the improvement of the standard of living; and be skilful in dealing with contemporary economic issues (NCS, 2003: 12-13).

Firstly, in order to apply the principles, processes and practices of the economy (macroeconomics), learners are made aware of the responsibilities and rights of consumers, enterprises, the public and the foreign sector (that is, participants in the economy), and they (the learners) simultaneously are taught not to exclude and marginalise the socially and economically disadvantaged (NCS, 2003: 11). This learning outcome focuses on the rights and responsibilities of participants in the economy with the aim not to exclude those who are economically and socially disadvantaged. Therefore, the argument can be made that this learning outcome is intended also to create conditions for social justice to be achieved, on the grounds that the latter (social justice) is linked to the 'capabilities' of learners to act equally and interdependently with others, and to recognise others' rights. In support of the latter claim, one finds that the learning outcome is very specific in terms of teaching learners the importance of the interdependent relationships between the economic, social, physical, technological and legal environments. Likewise, the learning

outcome also aims to expose learners to issues such as conservation, human rights and social responsibilities (NCS, 2003: 12).

Secondly, to analyse the dynamics of the markets, learners are taught to construct demand and supply and cost and revenue curves from raw or hypothetical data, and to illustrate and explain their interactions in the process of establishing prices and levels of production, in other words they are taught about microeconomics (NCS, 2003: 12). This learning outcome focuses on teaching learners about cost-benefit analyses of markets, desirable and undesirable distribution of resources, and government interventions to remedy undesirable distribution of resources if necessary. This learning outcome clearly emphasises the importance of understanding and being knowledgeable about the dynamics of markets in relation to political, more specifically government, responses to the undesirable distribution of resources. Hence, this learning outcome focuses on nurturing the 'capabilities' of learners to attend to injustices possibly caused by undesirable distribution of resources that requires the government's intervention on the grounds of not adversely affecting communities in the face of such unjust practices. In a way, learners are being taught what it means to ensure that markets do not result in the inequitable and unjust distribution of resources that could trigger escalating levels of unemployment and the exploitation of people disadvantaged by unstable market dynamics. What follows from this is that the learning outcome relating to microeconomics is meant to teach learners what it means to strive for social justice, because the latter is aimed at ensuring that learners enact their 'capabilities' to understand and perhaps deal with irregular economic imperatives.

Thirdly, to be aware of the policies and practices that can lead to improving people's living standards (economic pursuits), learners are expected to understand the need for reconstruction, sustainable growth and development in South Africa (NCS, 2003: 12). Learners also are expected to understand and analyse the inequalities of the past as they relate to wealth and poverty, and to understand policies and actions that can lead to improving the welfare of all citizens (NCS, 2003: 12). Being taught to understand policies and actions that can lead to improving people's welfare and other living standards is tantamount to learning what it means to improve aspects of their quality of life. By implication, learners are being given an opportunity through this outcome to enact and develop their capabilities in understanding actions and policies that could enhance social justice, because the latter is also connected to enacting and nurturing capabilities that could increase the quality of life of human beings.

Fourthly, to deal skilfully with contemporary economics issues, whether global or national, the learners should in fact be taught about social justice. Issues at stake here are labour, post-apartheid redress, poverty, globalisation, economic deterioration, resource exploitation, inflation, international agreements and the economics of tourism. To learn how to enact their 'capabilities' in dealing with such contemporary issues, learners are expected to learn about social justice for the reason that the latter is linked to creating conditions (such as developing skills and competencies) to deal with redress, poverty and the negative effects of globalisation. In a way, learners should be taught how to understand exploitation, redress and other forms of injustice that work against the economic development of the country.



The following section deals with the human capabilities and how it relates both to the learning outcomes of the Economics curriculum as well as objectives of the GDFs. In addition, I show how my own teaching connects with the application of human capabilities in relation to the Economics curriculum and the social justice agenda of the GDFs.

1. *Being able to live to the end of a human life.* In Economics, Grade 11 learners are taught about the issues of poverty, where concepts such as absolute and relative poverty are highlighted and how each of these types of poverty should be eliminated by the government so as to ensure that every individual is capable of living a healthy and good life. As an educator I discuss with my learners also the causes and effects of poverty on the social well being of individuals in South Africa and what is required of them, as well as future citizens to overcome the vicious recurring poverty cycle that has plagued many poor communities for years.
2. *Being able to have good health, and to have adequate shelter.* In Grade 10 learners are introduced to the concept of scarcity in Economics, which relates to Nussbaum's second central capability here. Learners are taught of the importance of allocating scarce resources that may be in the form of financial resources to provide for their countless needs and wants. This is important because learners need to be educated on managing their financial resources efficiently to ensure that as future citizens they are adequately nourished and that they have adequate shelter. Also learners are taught of the promotion and

violation of human rights, where I discuss with learners their rights as humans to adequate shelter, nutrition and so forth.

3. *Being able to move freely from place to place.* This central capability also relates to the content in the Economics curriculum such as the promotion and violation of human rights, where individuals should be protected from physical and sexual abuse. Learners are taught on the social performance indicators and their uses such as demographics, health and nutrition, education, housing as well as urbanisation. Learners for example are taught on urbanisation, which involves relocating from rural areas to urban areas in the search for employment, education, nutrition, health care and/or housing.
4. *Being able to use the senses, to imagine, think and reason and to do these things in a truly human way.* This capability relates to the four factors of production in Economics, in particular entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship involves combining the other three factors of production, namely, land or natural resources, capital and labour. The factor of production also involves individuals developing creative and innovative ideas and tangible solutions to particular problems faced by consumers. Learners are taught in Economics to use their imagination and thought to create works and events of their own choices whether religious, literary, musical, and so forth. This capability allows learners to engage in their own freedoms of expression whether it relates to both political and artistic speech and freedom of religious exercise or whether it just involves having pleasurable experiences.

5. *Being able to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves; to love those who love and care for us.* This capability relates to wealth creation in the Economics curriculum, where learners are taught about meanings of wealth, its nature and sources, wealth redistribution methods by the government, economic growth and also on the standard of living of people. This central capability is not primarily concerned with personal wealth in the form of certain assets that individuals possess, but it also relates to the capabilities of people to use their social wealth to the benefits of others such as through donations or charity organisations.
  
6. *Being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's life.* This capability relates to the Grade 10 Economics curriculum, where learners are taught of the relationship that Economics has with other learning areas such as history, geography, accounting, business studies, as well as career opportunities that Economics offers in the commerce field. Learners ought to reflect critically about planning their future careers so as to ensure that they have a sense of liberty or freedom to make their own choices in life.
  
7. (a). *Being able to live with and toward others, to recognise and show concern for other human beings.* This capability relates to that of globalisation, its causes and economic consequences to nations, the absolute as well as comparative advantages and disadvantages of globalisation on rich and poor

economies. It (this capability) allows learners to engage about the importance of globalisation and what is required of them as future citizens to aid those disadvantaged by globalisation through measures to influence the government perhaps as strong and influential groups in society. In Economics I often use a map to depict the North-South divide that exists today, and through the use of images educate learners of the rich life styles that exist in the North and of the poor and struggling scenarios that plague the South.

(b). *Having the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation.* This central capability relates to the Grade 10 Economics curriculum where learners are taught of the composition of the South African population and labour force as well as the impact that HIV/ AIDS had on the workplace. Learners should exercise their capabilities and empower themselves of their rights in the workplace so as to prevent any form of racial discrimination enacted towards them.

8. *Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature.* This capability relates to the Grades 11 and 12 of the Economics curriculum, where learners are taught on sustainable development. Learners would often discuss problems of environmental deterioration and intensive resource exploitation with particular reference to South Africa. Here, learners exercise their capability by investigating recent international agreements with regard to sustainable development and discuss the significance of the various conferences held.

9. *Being able to laugh, to play, to enjoy recreational activities.* This capability relates to the Grade 12 Economics curriculum which focuses on the economic importance of tourism to South Africa. Tourism is particularly relevant to this capability where learners are taught of the importance of indigenous knowledge systems within South Africa so as to educate learners of the rich history of African culture, religion and other socio-cultural factors.

10.(a). *Being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life.* This capability deals with the Grade 10 Economics curriculum where learners are taught labour relations and dispute resolution mechanisms including labour rights and conventions within the context of the South African labour market. Here, learners are taught of their rights in the workplace which can be seen as democratic within a South African context. Learners need to be taught their rights so as to empower themselves as future political leaders of influential parties or groups.

*(b). Being able to hold property (both land and movable goods), and having property rights on an equal basis with others.* This capability relates to wealth, in particular unemployment, and measures that are to be implemented by the government to solve this contemporary issue in Economics (Grade 10 Economics curriculum). Here, learners exercise their capabilities where they discuss the importance of employment not only on one's own well being but also on the economic significance of employment in the economy. This

capability relates to the goals of the RDP which includes developing meaningful relationships with others that is an important facet as it ensures a form of democratic action.

## **5.4 Summary**

In this chapter, I have examined how the four learning outcomes of the FET Economics curriculum seem to be linked to an enactment of learners' capabilities as they endeavour to gain understanding of, become knowledgeable about and critically analyse macroeconomics, microeconomics, economic pursuits and contemporary economic issues. When learners enact and develop their capabilities, they actually contribute towards creating conditions for social justice to occur. Following this it can be argued that the learning outcomes of the FET Economics curriculum are not just connected to the achievement of social justice, but also offer learners opportunities to enact their capabilities in the pursuit thereof. Consequently, an important goal of the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs) can be realised through the teaching of the FET Economics curriculum.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

I began this study quite enthusiastically because I wanted to ascertain whether the teaching of learning outcomes to FET Economics learners can have desirable results. By this I wanted to know whether what I teach has some connection with what learners can do in the cultivation of a better society for all people in this country. I started off ambitiously in my thinking, considering that I imagined that schooling can have some effect on the way learners approach society and how they eventually shape it. I soon came to the realisation that what I was about to research would not only enhance my optimism and confidence in the South African NCS (NCS, 2003) but, more importantly, that I would come up with ideas of how I could improve my own practice as an educator and how I could encourage learners to think beyond the confines of learning outcomes in relation to the NCS. This brings me to some of the most important findings of my research endeavour.

## 6.2 Findings of Study

### *6.2.1 Initiating learners into the theme of social justice*

In relation to my primary research question of how the Economics school curriculum (FET phase) seems to be aligned with the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs), I first needed to confirm that the learning outcomes, namely macroeconomics, microeconomics, economic pursuits and contemporary issues, were aligned with the GDFs. This was not as obvious as it might seem. After I embarked on my research I found that there was some connection between the learning outcomes and the GDFs (as I have shown in Chapter 3). The key binding aspect that I found to align the learning outcomes with the GDFs is the notion of social justice – that is, striving to attain equality amongst different people, cultivating solidarity amongst them, and recognising that all people have rights that ought to be respected and ensured.

In order to ensure that learners are initiated into learning about social justice, I contend that learners need to be educated about the harmful effects of capitalism and its effect on the poor in the global economy. Being initiated into understandings about social justice in the classroom will allow learners to engage in debates and discussions on the disparity of wealth that has been created partially by colonialism in this country. As an educator, I have already devised ways to educate learners about the various economic systems. For example, I use a presentation chart with images depicting capitalism, providing learners with illustrations of the many rich



multinational corporations that exist in the world. I would then question them, using an image of the poor, to illustrate the discrepancy that exists between the rich and poor. I would often use an image of a balancing scale in my charts, where the poor would be illustrated on the one side as the heavier of the two, while the other side of the scale would represent the minority of rich who own most of the financial resources of the global economy. Learners would often debate the causes and consequences of this balancing scale in relation to unemployment, poverty as well as other socio-economic ills plaguing the African continent. I continue pursuing this form of teaching about social justice in the future (cf. 4.6; 5.3).

In addition, I would provide learners with the latest statistics on the Human Development Index, which measures the performances of economies, and would place great emphasis on the health, education and population indicators. Here it is important for learners to be exposed to the indicators that are used to measure the performance of economies and to compare the performance of rich and poor economies. I would often use images depicted on PowerPoint slides to illustrate the North-South divide, with many images depicting the rich lifestyles of developed nations and comparing these lifestyles with those of people in poorer nations. Learners need to be exposed to the traditions and lifestyles of the rich and, as future members of society, to use the knowledge that has been learned in the classroom to educate leaders and policy makers, to adapt and change policies by the government to best help the poor, to combat poverty and unemployment and come up with ideas on how to bridge the rich-poor gap that exists in South Africa (cf. 4.6).

Furthermore, by using media clips of poverty in countries such as Somalia, Nigeria, Kenya and Zimbabwe I ensure that learners are exposed to the effect of poverty on the people living in the respective countries. Learners can be initiated into the theme of social justice in the classroom by collectively reflecting on the experiences of learners who are exposed to the impoverished township areas of Cape Town by comparing the lifestyles of the poor with the living standards of those who might be better off. For instance, I will take a group of Grade 11 Economics learners to learn about the challenges of life in the townships, e.g. lack of proper infrastructure, unemployment, poverty, lack of proper infrastructure, etc., where the learners will be expected to interview local residents on their views about the potential upliftment of impoverished areas of Cape Town.

Concerning economic pursuits for Grade 10 learners, learners are taught the history of economic development in South Africa and about the impact of colonialism and globalisation on the African continent. Issues for discussion in the Economics classroom range from the impact of colonialism, industrialisation and exploitation of labour on African economies. I often divide learners into groups of four individuals, expecting one group to discuss the pros and cons of globalisation and industrialisation and the other group to discuss the negative impact globalisation and industrialisation have had on Africa. Issues for discussion in the Economics classroom varies from the impact of colonisation on the African economy to the impact of industrialisation and exploitation of labour on the African continent in relation to the achievement of social justice. To my mind, initiating learners into what constitutes social justice would teach them to respect the diversity of every individual,

and allow all individuals to change their sometimes biased attitudes and behaviours towards those who are marginalised and experience abject conditions of poverty. In essence, learning to understand and attend to social justice in South Africa has emerged as an important theme in my analyses of the Economics learning outcomes and the GDFs (cf. 4.6; 5.3).

### *6.2.2 Learners enacting their capabilities*

In my investigation of what constitutes social justice, I started with Rawls. In some ways, the GDFs have in mind that people are not denied their basic liberties and that equity and redress are to be searched for on the grounds that the marginalised poor should gain priority as the government endeavours to redress the social and economic inequalities brought about by apartheid. However, what I found through discourse analysis is that the concept 'social justice' has acquired much currency in the work of Martha Nussbaum. Nussbaum's association of social justice with the enactment of 'capabilities', and my subsequent analysis that learning outcomes can actually be interpreted as supporting drivers to achieve social justice are in fact a significant finding in the thesis. Considering that the learning outcomes in Economics refer to 'the knowledge, skills and values learners should acquire' at the completion of the FET band (NCS, 2003: 7), it could be inferred that learning outcomes can be considered as 'capabilities' that learners enact as they pursue their Economics skills. Thus, to learn how to argue, discriminate between facts and opinion, demonstrate numerical and spatial ability (arithmetic, mathematics, and statistics), communicate effectively (through debate and oral presentation), think critically, solve problems,

make predictions/forecasts, investigate such as to identify, describe, discuss, explain, examine, analyse and evaluate, and complete tables, draw graphs, write assignments, reports and journals and prepare portfolios are actually Economics skills learners acquire, that is, their 'capabilities' are enacted. And, if acquiring learning outcomes is actually seen as synonymous with applying and nurturing their 'capabilities', learners are in fact embarking on an acquisition of learning outcomes to contribute towards the achievement of social justice. This is so because the enactment of capabilities is tantamount to seeking to establish justice in society (as I have shown in Chapter 5). In other words, I have found that attempting to attain the learning outcomes of Economics involves exercising capabilities on the part of learners.

### *6.2.3 Learning to deliberate*

Considering that the learning outcomes are intended to produce the kind of learner that will '... act in the interest of a society based on respect for democracy, equality, human dignity and social justice' (NCS, 2003: 4), I have found that learning outcomes or the realisation thereof can actually be considered as democratic actions aimed at achieving social justice (as I have shown in Chapter 4) – a crucial objective of the GDFs. The reason for this is that learning to participate, to act responsibly, to respect diversity, to include others, and to deliberate are democratic actions that are in tune with an enactment of the Economics learning outcomes. In fact acquiring competence in Economics learning outcomes prepares learners to acquire

knowledge and skills as to how to interpret and achieve the objectives of the GDFs (cf. 4.1.2; 4.2.2).

#### *6.2.4 Cultivating human freedoms*

I have found that embarking on democratic action can contribute to economic development. Like economic development, which demands that people use their freedoms towards improving elements of their human wellbeing such as their living conditions, education, health care and socio-political wellbeing, and towards protecting the environment, democratic actions are enactments of ‘capabilities’ that can help achieve human freedoms and hence economic development. The point is (as has been shown in Chapter 4) that if people want to ensure economic development, they have to be free and improve their capabilities through communication and participation in the social welfare activities that can improve people’s lives. They have to engage in democratic actions. By attaining the Economics learning outcomes, learners can acquire the skills and values associated with democratic actions that can enable economic development (cf. 4.1.2; 4.3; 4.2).

#### *6.2.5 Focusing on local economic development*

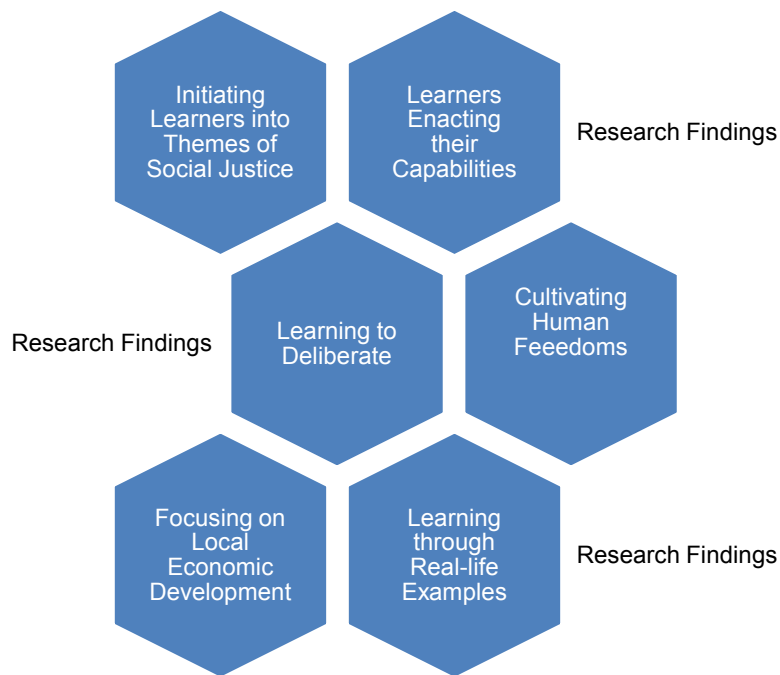
In my analysis of the Growth and Development Frameworks (GDFs) I found that creating decent work, reducing inequality and defeating poverty stood out as the central challenges to the South African economy. As identified by the New Growth Path, ‘... the economy has not created sufficient employment opportunities for many

of our people over the past three decades. Creating more and better jobs must lie at the heart of any strategy to fight poverty, reduce inequalities and address rural underdevelopment'. Learning outcome 3, namely economic pursuits, minimally refers to 'wealth creation', but no real emphasis seems to be placed on employment creation and job drivers that are central to the NGP. Thus, it would not be unreasonable to suggest that the Economics curriculum should make provision for the inclusion of a more comprehensive account of employment creation and of job drivers such as infrastructure for employment and development; improvement of job creation in the economic sector; seizure of the potential of new economies; investigation of social capital; and spatial development (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 44-51). Moreover, I have found that the Economics curriculum does not specifically emphasise a focus on local economic development (LED), which I have shown in Chapter 4 can contribute towards the enhancement of economic development in South Africa. In this regard, the NGP accentuates the following with reference to attending to LED in particular: 'Given the extraordinary differences in natural, economic and social conditions across our country, provinces and localities must adapt the broad drivers in the growth path to their circumstances. A spatial economic strategy will indicate how the job drivers affect different provinces, municipalities and rural areas, linking in to the rural development strategy and industrial policies' (Republic of South Africa, 2010: 41) (cf. 4.1.2; 4.3.4.2).

#### *6.2.6 Learning through real-life examples*

The current NCS and the new CAPS do relate to the GDFs but not in a way I have discovered during my investigation. Here I refer to the ways in which democratic action, economic development and social justice seem to stand out in the GDFs. Thus, when one teaches the learning outcome contemporary issues, these concepts should be fore-grounded more, as learners endeavour to acquire and strengthen their problem-solving, analytical and evaluative skills. In this regard, I specifically have in mind teaching about contemporary issues, such as poverty in township communities, the escalating inequality between rich and poor, and increasing levels of unemployment in South Africa, using a social justice orientation. I use real-life examples outlining the major disparities in income levels in South Africa. Only by listening to the stories of people living in poor communities can learners begin to have more informed understandings of the negative effects of unemployment. They in turn would be expected to come up with possible solutions at the local level to show how unemployment can be reduced. Moreover, I would arrange tours to township communities to expose learners to what is really experienced by their poor fellow citizens. The reason for intending to do the aforementioned is that social justice is a central theme of the learning outcomes and GDFs (cf. 4.3.4.1).

Now that I have identified the main findings of this thesis (as indicated in Figure 3 below), I shall put forward some recommendations about the possibilities that this study has to offer in relation to Economics education. These recommendations are meant to illuminate the FET Economics curriculum, rather than undermining it. By so doing I would be making recommendations on the important aspects that ought to guide educators' practices in relation to teaching the FET Economics curriculum.



**Figure 4: Representation of Research Findings**

## 6.3 Recommendations

### *6.3.1 Learning to change real life conditions of people*

Considering that this is a study about Economics education in the FET phase and how the learning outcomes align with GDFs, my own teaching will be far more directed towards emphasising the importance of learning Economics knowledge, values and skills in order to think more creatively about cultivating aspects of social justice in local communities, instead of overemphasising what the national government ought to do to ensure more jobs and local involvement in the economy. This means that my teaching will rather begin to emphasise more local economic



development (LED) in relation to the learning outcomes with the hope that broad thinking about economic development in the country will ensue. Here I have in mind encouraging learners to come up with projects about how, for instance, tourism activities can generate income and hence employment for people. In this way, I can teach learning outcomes in relation to possibly changing aspects of the real life conditions of people.

### *6.3.2 Learning to reduce unemployment through technology*

Regarding my assessment strategies, and in addition to the examinations, I would request of learners to produce innovative and technologically assisted reports on their assignments about poverty alleviation and job creation in township communities. This seems to be a far more meaningful way of assessing learners' understanding of economic development, democratic action and social justice in relation to learning outcomes and GDFs.

Nowadays, many learners spend countless hours immersed in popular social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, or play computer games such as Civilisation or simulations such as SimCity. In terms of a new and dynamic pedagogical approach to teaching Economics in my classroom, I shall use these technologies, which hopefully will help learners to shape their forms of communicating, operating and collaborating with one another. Through the use of these innovative technologies I also shall teach content in new and dynamic ways. Prior to this research, I would use a movie called 'The Gods must be crazy' to show Grade 10 Economics learners

the shift from one stage of economic development to the next. The movie shows the traditional stage of development during which the indigenous *Khoisan* people hunted for and gathered food using traditional methods. This traditional stage in development is then contrasted with the modern, fast-paced lifestyle of today in which technology, integration and communication are depicted as main facets of the current world. I would use PowerPoint presentations and video clips in the classroom as a means to ensure that learners are entertained and so that learning would be stimulated in a dynamic environment.

I will now take the initiative to adopt other technologies to ensure that learning will be further enhanced for both the learners and myself. Over a one-week period, I would allow learners to engage in the computer game 'Civilisation' in the classroom, as the purpose and goal of the game is to successfully build an enduring empire. The players have to make decisions for their particular civilisation in relation to societal development and diplomacy. As the game progresses, new discoveries emerge, such as pottery or nuclear fusion, through which the game would demonstrate to the learners the various stages of economic development that occur over time. Learners exposed to the game also will be provided with leadership skills, which will benefit them as future members of society. The game also hopefully will teach learners skills to manage scarce resources efficiently, that is, teach them an integral aspect of Economics.

Grade 11 Economics learners will be allowed to engage in the simulation game called SimCity, in which the objective is to create a thriving, sustainable city. In the

game, learners will have to make choices about establishing types of property, such as commercial, industrial or residential property. When they reach the stage in the game where they have to assume the role of mayor, they will be confronted with issues of crime prevention, pollution control, waste management and so on. I think this game is relevant for teaching learners' management skills, as well as the skills required to overcome issues that have an impact on the environment and affect its sustainability.

Using social networking I will communicate with learners regarding assignments, class discussions and content that supports their work, such as video clips on economic development, poverty, unemployment, inflation and so forth. The networking will be particularly useful for me as an educator in terms of ease of use, and in terms of effective communication and convenience. It will hopefully also be useful for the more introverted learners in the class, allowing them to engage in debates on and discussions of the content (such as preventing unemployment) with other learners.

#### *6.3.3 Altering one's own practices by becoming a change agent*

This brings me to a discussion of how I would adapt my teaching based on my findings, namely that democratic action, economic development and social justice emerged as three important themes in my research. For the reason that my own investigation into the learning outcomes guided me to an analysis of the aforementioned concepts, I thought it appropriate to revisit my own teaching of

Economics and how I would do things differently, and in turn offer guidelines for how other Economics educators can change their pedagogical practices. In the first instance, what came to my attention is that one cannot just talk about democratic action as a theme that is central to the GDFs without teaching the learning outcomes for Economics in the FET phase in a way that both the learners and I engage in such action. This means that my teaching should in some way encourage learners to acquire Economics skills through participating in democratic action. For example, when teaching Grade 10 learners about unemployment and the approaches to solve it, and about labour markets, labour relations and dispute resolution, and labour rights and conventions, I will rely on the learners to offer points of view on these contemporary issues. The learners would then be asked to engage with the positions on these issues shared by the other learners. Therefore, through an offering of points of view and by listening to the views of one another, the learners would be encouraged to agree or disagree and to reach consensus about particular understandings of these contemporary issues. They will then be required to compare this consensus with and make judgements about their prior understandings of unemployment, problem solving, labour markets and rights, as well as dispute resolutions with those understandings about the issues I have taught them. In this way, learners do not only participate in class, but actually engage in some form of deliberative inquiry about contemporary issues in Economics. Hopefully my teaching will be far more deliberative than what it is at the moment, where I use PowerPoint slides to explain concepts to the learners, but do not always draw on their deliberative views of some contemporary issues in the Economics curriculum. What I am recommending is that Economics learning outcomes, particular the outcome

relating to contemporary issues, should be taught in a deliberative way. Teaching through deliberation will offer learners more opportunities to think issues through, that is, reflect on the issues more deeply and in turn come up with possibilities of their own for how people can collectively embark on improving their lives.

Similarly, as has been mentioned in Chapter 4, economic development also involves the removal of human restraints that cause them to act without reason. What I would do in relation to teaching learners what it means to be humanly free is to encourage them to come up with ideas, for instance about what topics they would like to see included in the Economics curriculum, together with what Economics skills would be learnt. Teaching economic development to Economics learners places great emphasis on them as future leaders through learning about poor communities and assisting them in their upliftment. In the Economics classes I will be shifting away from focusing primarily on content related to economic growth and development and will rather focus on understanding the sources of global poverty and competing approaches to local and global poverty reduction.

Learners should actively engage in and deliberate with one another on economic development and its impact on poverty reduction in countries in Africa. As an assignment for Grade 10 learners, they would be required to conduct a feasibility study or project with the aim of reducing poverty or improving the conditions in a developing country in Africa. Once the feasibility study is complete, the learners will be required to develop a workable plan of action for reducing or eliminating poverty in the particular less-developed country assigned to them. The learners would be urged

to provide innovative methods of trying to improve the lives of the poor through sanitation facilities such as odourless waste removal, or telecommunication methods, healthcare and education for all.

Grade 11 learners will be required to show the map of a designated developing country in Africa and discuss the economic and social indicators used to measure the economy's performance. The learners will be encouraged to discuss the performance of the developing country, as well as measures that the local government implements in order to improve the standard of living of the particular country, as well as the economic growth rate and the level of economic development. Learners will be encouraged to play the national anthem of the country assigned to them, as well as present their findings to the class with the flag and other memorabilia of the country.

With regard to Grade 12 learners, I will take a group of learners to camp in the wilderness so that they can be exposed to aspects of poverty, such as an environment with no lighting, poor sanitation and where food is scarce. These would be life-altering experiences for the learners, as many of my current Economics learners are exposed to a medium to high standard of living, where electronic devices such as smart phones (Blackberry and iPhone) are regarded as expensive items. Learners are expected to find living in areas where development is low, that impacted on their social lives as well, and where communication with the outside world was cut off, in the same way many poor Africans are suffering in impoverished areas. They perhaps need to be exposed to some of the acute vulnerabilities of the poor.

By implication, I would support the notion of Bond (2003: 2) and recommend that the current themes in the FET Economics curriculum should be aimed at fostering LED from the bottom up, which involves the idea of community-based development in order to sensitise people in local communities to become more attuned to local poverty, and calculations of the economic benefits derived by poor people from the provision of municipal services and a renewed commitment to making municipalities become more entrepreneurial. I foresee that learners would come up with innovative ways of how to encourage small business enterprises that can create opportunities for capacity development and the conscientisation of local people with ideas that can benefit improved living.

Furthermore, teaching Economics for learners in Grades 10 to 12 will also be linked to issues of access to tertiary education. This is an aspect that is given scant attention in the current curriculum, but I would endeavour to raise and discuss issues of access to tertiary education on the grounds that many learners do not gain access to further education and training as a consequence of financial constraints, as well as perhaps having underachieved at school, and therefore cannot find their way into a university, university of technology or college to pursue further studies. Teaching learners about social injustices also means making them aware of the consequences of underperforming in school, and will stimulate in them an interest to apply for financial support in the event that they might want to pursue a tertiary qualification. Economics education has to be linked to career development so that learners can be assisted in making appropriate choices in pursuit of countenancing the injustices that are escalating in our society. More and more learners from previously disadvantaged

communities do not pursue tertiary education. One way of contributing towards economic development in this country is to ensure that people become more knowledgeable through some kind of exposure to formal tertiary studies. Only then can we begin to tackle the social injustices that continue to permeate our society seventeen years after our first democratic elections.

#### *6.3.4 Teaching learners about citizenship*

Although citizenship is also mentioned in the Economics curriculum under the theme of economic redress in South Africa, not much other than developing 'better-skilled citizens' is mentioned. For me, a 'better-skilled citizen' should be linked to the idea of producing a democratic citizen. The reason for this is that a democratic citizen is one who exercises both rights and responsibilities in relation to striving towards human flourishing. A 'better-skilled' citizen might be able to do things better and perhaps exercise his or rights skilfully, but this does not mean he or she does so responsibly. For instance, one can skilfully endeavour to address inequality and poverty, but this could lead to more inequality and even an exacerbation of poverty. Here, I think of schools that have been assigned various 'quintile' statuses by the education authorities in South Africa, with the schools in the lower quintile receiving more funding than those with a higher quintile rating. However, higher-rated quintile schools might comprise of learners from disadvantaged communities and the school would then not receive adequate state funding, resulting in greater inequality in comparison with other schools with a high quintile status but with learners from advantaged communities. To act as a democratic citizen one would act responsibly

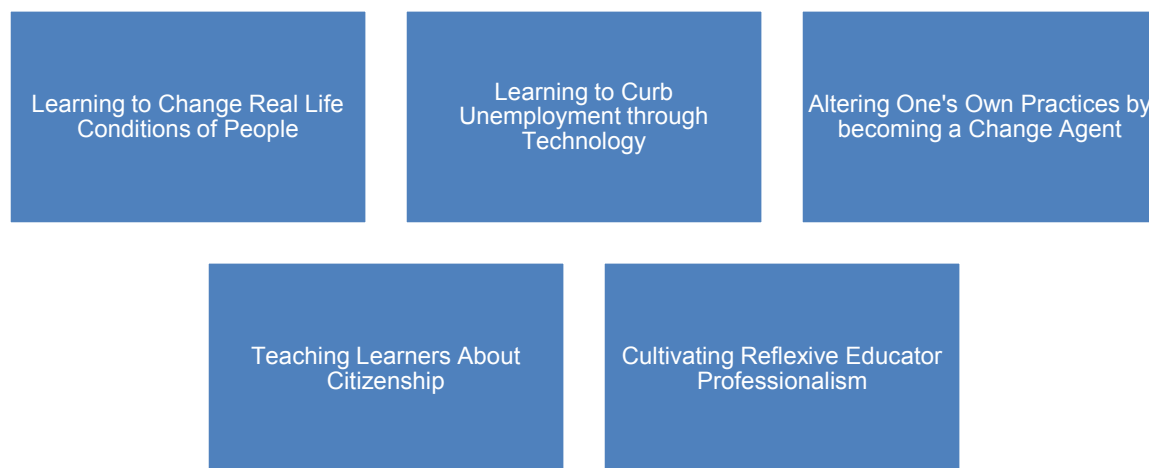


and not, for instance, rate schools according to quintiles that might disadvantage them further. The point is that talking about a democratic citizen is perhaps more appropriate than talking about a 'better-skilled citizen'.

#### *6.3.5 Cultivating reflexive educator professionalism*

By far the most important contribution this thesis has made has been to my own professional development as an educator. Throughout the writing of this thesis I have been involved in the teaching of Grade 10 to 12 learners at school; the review of the Economics FET curriculum for a private college; the attendance of school governing body and teacher union meetings; the tutoring of historically disadvantaged learners for the Western Cape Education Department and providing private tuition for some learners; and the examination of scripts for the 2011 Grade 12 learners. I became more confident as an educator, and this enabled me to engage more deliberately with the learners. This has brought about a significant shift in my disposition and in my passion to teach at school level. In fact, my enthusiasm for the teaching of Economics was enhanced and my interactions with different people caused me to reach out more to their understandings of society and to discover how educators can play more prominent roles in encouraging learners to become better human beings and democratic citizens. In this way, I have gained more as an educator because my sense of self-reflexivity has increased, my commitment to do well in life has taken a different and more positive turn, and my interest in teaching Economics well became enhanced. It is widely recognised that the professional development of educators is also aimed at improving schooling, and that educators are 'change agents' in those

practices that improve education (Villegas-Reimers, 2003: 12). One of the important tasks of educators as change agents in post-apartheid Economics classrooms is to develop their 'reflective capabilities' as part of their professional development (Reed, Davis & Nyabanyaba, 2002). This is where I consider my work in Economics classrooms as potentially contributing to my role as a change agent, particularly with regard to enhancing my reflective ability as an Economics educator (as indicated in Figure 4 below).



**Figure 5: Representation of Research Findings**

## 6.4 Limitations

### *6.4.1 The lack of a substantive comparative analysis*

This is a study about Economics education and the GDFs in relation to discourse analysis. Therefore I have focussed on both textual and contextual analyses, that is, I have analysed meanings that underscore both the Economics learning outcomes and those that inform the GDFs. Similarly, I have simultaneously analysed the contexts such as the FET Economics curriculum and GDFs proposed by the post-apartheid government. What I did not do and what is perhaps beyond the scope of this thesis (as indicated in Figure 6 below) is to show how my analysis of learning outcomes in relation to GDFs actually plays out in the context of specific schools or classrooms in which Economics is taught. This would perhaps have given me specific data on how particular schools in specific areas make sense of the learning outcomes in the context of their respective situations. For instance, my data for comparing Economics teaching in the FET band at schools in more affluent communities with that of poorer communities might have generated different perspectives in comparison to schools in lower income communities.

### *6.4.2 The potential of an empirical investigation*

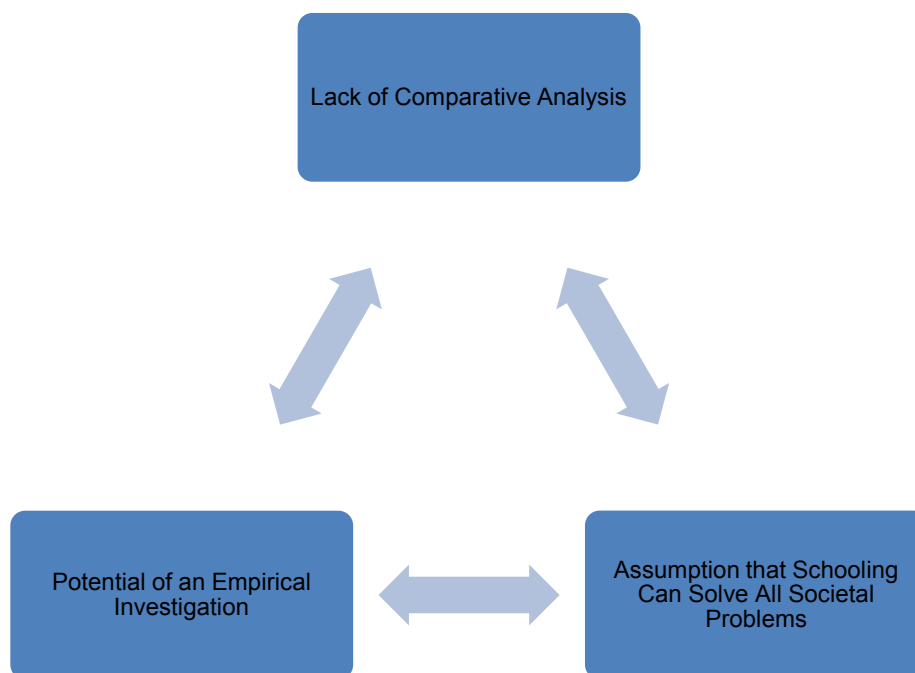
The insights gained about the Economics learning outcomes in different contexts would have produced more data about the way I should teach in those contexts. Anecdotally, I have learnt that learners in more affluent communities are more eager

to try out their learning of Economics principles and outcomes in practice. That is, there seems to be a direct connection between what they learn in class and how they want to become involved experientially in local economic development (LED) in disadvantaged communities. There is also the assumption that learners at schools in lower income communities are more intent on being taught Economics without seriously wanting to contribute to LED. This could have been an area for investigation, such as comparing how learners respond to LED at different schools in the Western Cape. However, such an empirical investigation would have extended the intended purpose of this investigation.

#### *6.4.3 The assumption that schooling can solve all societal problems*

Perhaps this thesis can also be interpreted as having placed a significant burden on the Economics curriculum in the FET phase to make a substantial contribution to economic development and the cultivation of social justice in this country. Thus, it seems as if the argument has been primarily to coerce schooling to solve the economic, social and political problems of our country. In hindsight, the latter might be a consideration. However, my argument was not for schooling to become the panacea for all the political, economic and social problems in society. Nowhere in the world has this ever been the case. And, here, I am also not discounting Dewey's notion that schools should be places of experimentation. Rather, what I argued for is that schooling in some way has to be connected to addressing real issues in society, which means that schooling should not and cannot be delinked from society. Schooling, and the FET Economics curriculum in particular, has to play some role in

preparing learners for the broader society in which they will one day play an important role as South Africa endeavours to further consolidate its democracy. Thus I have argued that learning outcomes cannot be disconnected from what a society ought to do and become. This is by no means suggesting that learning outcomes can solve all political, social and economic problems. On the contrary, they can only contribute towards producing more critical learners who have the qualities and skills to become freer human beings. And in this way they potentially could contribute indirectly to human flourishing and a country's endeavour to become economically sustainable.



**Figure 6: Limitations of Study**

## 6.5 Summary

When I embarked on investigating how the Economics learning outcomes in the FET phase align with the GDFs proposed by the South African government, I was fairly convinced that there was already some connection. What I was unaware of was the fact that my analysis of the GDFs would actually point towards the cultivation of social justice *through* the teaching of Economics for Grades 10 to 12. Similarly, I became even more persuaded that the learning outcomes actually aligned with the GDFs after I found that learning outcomes can and should actually be interpreted as ‘capabilities’ that learners can *use* and *build on* in order to contribute to the cultivation of social justice through the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), more specifically the FET Economics curriculum – that is, teaching learning outcomes by implication lends itself to cultivating democratic action and (local) economic development.

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